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MORNINGS AT MATLOCK.

BY

R. SHELTON MACKENZIE, D.C.L.

AUTHOR OF "TITIAN," AN ART-NOVEL.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

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MORNINGS AT MATLOCK.

What a contrast to the bright and glad yesterday did the next day present! There was fierce sunshine out of doors, dulness within, and, as this is an epidemic, the whole party suffered dreadfully. Books lay upon the table—no one felt disposed to read them. The newspapers had arrived—every one condemned them for not containing intelligence. The harp was out of tune—what matter, when no one was inclined to wake its slumbering soul of song. The Artist's portfolio was there—for the first time, its treasures were unheeded. The Novelist was silent — thinking, most probably, how he should dispose of his characters in a picturesque *tableau,* for the

closing chapter of his next fiction. The Irish gentleman was out of spirits.—and if he had been "in force," I doubt whether even a sickly smile would then have acknowledged the "flashes of merriment, that were wont to set the table in a roar." The Major was drowsy or musing, — perhaps planning how best to carry on a campaign against the widow's heart and hand. Sir Julian was reported to be writing letters in another room — happy man, to have any thing to occupy him. The ladies sat in "solemn silence," engaged in the manufacture of some of the nick-nackeries on which the fair sex so often delight to expend their time and their ingenuity. The very lap-dogs basked in the sun, and, as the newspaper paragraph-makers say, lazily "sank into the arms of Morpheus."

Thus it was within doors. There was not much difference outside—save, that there was a trifle more air, a little less shade. The day was intensely hot, as if it had been one of the dog-days, rather than a morning in May, for scarcely did a wandering zephyr venture out

to whisper through the leafy trees. Below, the river murmured by in a quiet sleepiness, more akin to stillness than to sound. The hum of the bees, the monotonous cawing of the rooks, the tinkling of sheep-bells in the distance, and, now and then, the spring-bird calling "Cuckoo! Cuckoo!" were the only sounds abroad. All appeared like the essence of dreamy inaction. Never before had I seen, in England, (and ere the summer had set in, too,) a day which bore so close a resemblance to an autumnal one within the tropics. Of course, we anticipated a magnificent thunder-storm, with sheeted lightning, and an inundation. But we had neither thunder, lightning, nor rain :—we had nothing but hot air and *ennui.*

How unlike the rural mirth of yesterday, when innocent Enjoyment had a thousand voices—when Pleasure scattered many a delight from her starry diadem—when the flush of Joy added new charms to the cheek of Beauty —when the lips which were wont to be silent were made eloquent by the delicious excitement of the moment,—when bright-eyed Hope

shed her smiles in such wild profusion, that some of them fell, like pleasant balm, upon the hearts of the thoughtful—when the blood ran through the veins with a quicker flow than in the every day stagnation of what we miscall Life—when the joy-crowned goblet of present Delight passed from lip to lip, and the nectareous draught gratified without maddening the senses. And *now!* the means of enjoyment were the same, but the prevailing spirit that had sparkled was evaporated. There was as much difference between yesterday's happiness, and to day's dulness, as between the ocean, stirred by the strong breeze which the mariner loves, sending a thousand richly-freighted argosies to their destined and distant ports, and the calm lake, in the midst of some stately pleasure-grounds, without a breath of wind to crisp its glassy surface, or ruffle its glassy smoothness. Oh, who with a heart to feel, but would prefer the one, even with its chance of peril, to the weary and monotonous calmness of the other!

The forenoon passed, as heavily as can be

imagined. Conversation was an effort, and indeed, all exercise of mind or body appeared alike unpleasant. It wanted some hours to dinner — that grand epoch in the daily life of true-born Englishmen. We should have been in despair, if, all of us feeling the pervading dulness, while none of us make an effort to dispel it, Tressilian had not entered the room. He informed us that, after writing his letters, he had gone out and sauntered by the banks of the river, getting into the shade as much as possible, and thus found it not so oppressively warm out of doors as he had anticipated.— that he had found the most enviable coolness in half-an-hour's visit to the Rutland Cavern, with Bryant for his escort, — that, on the strong recommendation of that worthy, who had even volunteered his companionship, he had entrusted his person to a sort of pony-chaise, curiously contrived with the merest apology for springs, and, passing through Cromford, had adventured as far as Wirksworth, the ancient capital of the Roman mining district of the Low Peak—that there he had

seen the brass dish, chained up in the Moot Hall, which, by a statute of Henry VIII, is the standard measure for lead ore in the Peak district,—that, while refreshments were getting ready at the Red Lion, they had visited Stonnis,—that there, on the topmost pinnacle of a very high hill, from out the fissures of which have sprung multitudinous pines, they had ascended a pile of great blocks of stones, from the summit of which he had a view as striking as any in the county of Derby, the prospect stretching far around, and embracing a variety of scenery at once varied and rich,—and that, finally, as we might see, he had returned full of life and spirits, to wonder at *our* being dull and subdued by the imps called "blue."

We wondered, as the Spanish sages did when Columbus made the egg stand, how none of us had happened to think of such an expedient, as he had found, for passing the time.

"Confess," said he, "that you are *ennuyés*. What aggravates the disease is, you yield to it. Believe me, that the slightest effort of will suffices to dethrone this incubus of the mind.

If you should happen to die now, a reflective jury would be justified in delivering a verdict of, 'Died from want of excitement.' Play—walk—read—dance—even have a game of blindman's buff on this hot day, rather than sit like so many inhabitants of the Castle of Indolence. Breathe, as I have done, the fresh air which continually passes over the Derbyshire hills, and wonder how, in the midst of scenery so romantic, you could ever have permitted *ennui* to enter. If you think the day too warm for out-of-door exercise—though I have taken and managed to survive it—try such a course of mental excitement as will keep your faculties on the *qui vive*, without fatiguing them."

The advice was excellent, but we confessed our inability, on the instant, to know exactly how to act upon it.

"I do not hesitate to say," said Sir Julian, "that you are perfectly unconscionable. It yet wants some hours to dinner, and none of you appear to know how the time is to be wiled away before that welcome event comes

off. Newspapers you do not read—sketches you do not look at—music you will not hear—skill at chess you will not exercise—luck at old-fashioned backgammon you will not try—why not, in such a dead lock, resume what we commenced so satisfactorily on the first day of our sojourn here? Lady Morton has heard our stories, and has been duly edified by them, no doubt: let me suggest that, in return, she shall now contribute some narrative of her own; and if—as we have somewhat run into personal confidences—she will do us the additional favour of being the heroine of her own tale, I venture to say that it will be the more acceptable. I could swear, in any court of Romance in Christendom, that she has not passed thus far through life—though she yet lingers on the threshold of youth—without some adventure worth listening to."

Lady Morton—after some pretty protestations, like those of Canning's "Weary Knife-Grinder," which went for nothing—signified her compliance, but protested that it was difficult to sit within doors, on such a day, to

say nothing of speaking for some time. At another opportunity, she would cheerfully become a story-teller for our gratification ; but it was really impracticable at present.

Sir Julian, the Major, and the Irishman, were here observed to lay their heads together in grave and momentous consultation. Presently, the trio quitted the apartment. Half an hour afterwards, the Major returned, and communicated the result of their deliberations.

The New Bath Hotel, at which our party stopped, is unquestionably one of the prettiest places of public accommodation, even in England, where our requirements, on the score of comfort and elegance, are usually very considerable. It is only surpassed, I think, by the Castle Hotel, at Ross, in Monmouthshire, —and there, by the greater extent of view, and variety of scenery. In front—I now speak of the hotel at Matlock, and not of that at Ross—there is a capacious esplanade, stretching the whole length of the building and its extensive garden. The house itself consists of a centre and two wings. The gardens,

which are of some extent, and tastefully laid out, are to the north of the building. There is an artificial piece of water in this garden, near which the patriarchal lime-tree—certainly more than six hundred years old, according to Rhodes' "Peak Scenery,"—as fine as any of those which are the boast of Oxford, spreads out its leafy canopy.

Beside this lime-tree, and so arranged as to give the party the full benefit of its shade, the Major, drawing on his recollection of former bivouacs in the Peninsula, had contrived to erect as good a substitute for a tent, as the combined skill of himself and his friends had been able to improvise. It was sufficient to exclude the gaze of the curious spectators in front; and, really, with the help of sofa-cushions, rugs, and cloaks (all of which did duty on this occasion as ottomans), it was a very pleasant combination of gipsyism, *al fresco*, with the aids and appliances of Eastern ease. To this place the ladies were now duly conducted by the Major, that pleasure and honour being conceded to him as the suggester

of the *pis-aller*, which he dignified, for the nonce, with the name of The Divan. Here, too, he had taken care to provide refreshments—fruit, wine, and cakes. Here, also, he told us, he fancied that Lady Morton, with the blue sky above her, and as much fresh air about her as could by any possibility be obtained, might be able to perform her promise, and indulge her friends with the expected narrative.

The attentive kindness which had made all of these out-of-door arrangements, and so evidently for her accommodation, met with its reward in a very sweet smile, and Lady Morton expressed herself quite ready to gratify us.

Premising that she was a lively, agreeable woman, with quick and intelligent dark eyes, and pretty coral lips, half concealing the whitest teeth I ever saw—that her features, though not what any one, except a lover, would call beautiful, or even handsome, were strikingly *spirituelle*—that her voice was sweet as the song of a nightingale (I have never

heard a sweeter voice before nor since)—and that her years were yet very distant from the "certain age" which women have a horror of approaching—it may be imagined that we were prepared to listen and to be pleased. The cerulean imps, whose unwelcome presence had so much annoyed us, vanished from that moment.

Grouped around her, like the listeners in the garden of Boccaccio around one of the story-tellers of the "Decameron," we awaited the promised narrative; and our expectancy was the more keen, because we were to hear a personal adventure, and a true one—so ran the implied compact. After an inconsiderable pause, during which the fair lady seemed to be collecting and arranging her remembrances, she thus related her narrative, to an audience as attentive as ever listened to an Oriental story-teller, full of reminiscences,

> "After the fashion of the time,
> And humour of the golden prime
> Of good Haroun Alraschid."

I.

THE HEIRESS.

Story! I have none. I am simply a woman, and not a heroine. I can boast of no hair-breadth 'scapes! I have had no adventures. I have been a stay-at-home traveller all my days. I have led a calm, quiet, lady-like life, and have nothing, positively nothing, worth my telling, or your listening to.

Besides, what a disadvantage you would take me at. Nearly every body else has told a story; and mine, after all of yours, cannot, as poor Desdemona said, be other than a "most lame and impotent conclusion." Pray, then, absolve me from my promise, and I will dance,

play, sing, do any thing else you wish. Instead of dissipating *ennui*, I shall but increase it.

You shake your heads and hold me to the bond. Well, yours be the penalty. Bear witness, each and all, that I give you warning full and fair.

If you *will* have a narrative, and, more than all, a true one, I shall even give you a personal anecdote. It is quite matter-of-fact : no mystery, no horrors, nothing extraordinary, and only dashed with the slightest possible quantity of romance.

Fifteen years ago, I was just fifteen years of age.—It seems but as yesterday. My father resided in this very county of Derby, where he had a tolerable estate. He was an honest, true-hearted, wilful-minded country gentleman, burthened or blessed with a family of daughters, whose number equalled that of the Muses. How earnestly he longed for a son ! But longing went for nothing, and, by the time I was born, he had made up his mind to bear the disappointment with all proper patience. I do not think that, latterly, he

lamented the want of a male heir more than ten times in every day.

He was one of the old school. That is, he was fond of field sports,—fond of the bottle,—so fond of his family honour that, although he might dispose of his estate as he wished, he had made up his mind to leave it to Sir Edward Morton, the head of the house,—and so attached to the Constitution that, often to the detriment of his own, it was his time-honoured custom, night after night, to stand by it, when, truth to say, his libations to the rosy god had left him unable to stand by any thing else.

On the whole, however, my father was what is called "a good sort of man." Your six-bottle men—your mighty Nimrods—your thorough John Bull gentlemen, who imported their own wines, brewed their own October, and killed their own mutton, have nearly all passed away; and, if the truth be told, we have no great loss in them. It is a pity that, in losing this class, we seem also to have lost their genuine, hearty hospitality. I know that

there are exceptions—so, Sir Julian need not think that I mean any thing personal as respects Tressilian Court—but the open-hearted hospitality of our English gentry seems to have vanished, and to be succeeded by cold ceremony, which very inefficiently supplies its place.

I am too digressive: let me return to my father. He lived happily enough among his friends, and the only care that ever flitted by him—always excepting his grief that he was *son*-less, like a Greenland winter—was caused by the thought that life was short, and that he could scarcely hope to see his nine daughters married before he died. But my dear, kind, managing mother was quite an adept in matrimonial tactics—she must have been a match-maker by intuition, for she lived far from the London marriage-marts—and she contrived that, year after year, a daughter was sent into the circulation of connubial currency.

Heaven only knows *how* this was accomplished, for no fortunes were paid or promised—it was known that my father meant the

estate to go to the elder branch of the family —and it certainly was not the beauty of my sisters that got them well-wedded, for I may say, and without any very extraordinary vanity, that plain as *I* am, I was by far the best-looking of the family.

[Now, her Ladyship was not what one would call "a beauty," but she undoubtedly did not merit the insinuation of plainness, and it was one which nobody but herself would have ventured. As she made it, her eyes involuntarily turned to the reflexion of herself in a splendid mirror opposite the ottoman on which she sat. Her auditors noted the glance, and smiled. The same glance which showed herself to herself, also allowed her to perceive the eager gaze of admiration which the Major fixed upon her. At this moment, when the pale cheek blushed, and the dark eye brightened, she looked almost lovely—and she knew it! So, she felt that the ardour of that admiring gaze might be forgiven—for when did Woman

ever feel really angry at homage rendered to her charms? To us who, on the principle of the spectators seeing more of the game than the players, had the advantage of overlooking the moves, and noting the bye-play, it appeared pretty certain that the lady would presently cry "check" to the Major,—and it seemed as if it would be his own fault if, with the slightest possible delay, after that, this gallant gentleman might not prevail upon her to consent to be "mated." This was our general feeling, not audibly expressed in words, but intercommunicated by significant glances from each to each.]

Nay, not a word. I see what you would say. Spare your compliments. In very truth, my sisters were not very famous for good looks. But then they were pretty well accomplished, as accomplishments went at that time. They could draw a little,—play a little,—sing a little,—and dance a great deal. They were excellent house-wives, — most notable managers. You smile,—let me tell

you that this last is a first rate advantage in the country. A woman so endowed, although portionless in other matters, is something of a prize in a country household. If she does not *bring* a fortune, she sometimes may *save* one,—though I have known families in whose case the verdict might be "Ruined by Economy."

It is not of any consequence now in what manner it happened, but it is certain that my sisters, to use the proper and conventional phrase, are all exceedingly well off. Mine has been a more stirring life. I have moved in higher circles; I have been stanzäed for my beauty,—I have been quoted as a wit (mind, I use the words that others used, for I hate wit, and I do not possess beauty),—I have been as happy as most women in my station, but I question whether, after all, my enjoyments,—(society, fashion, flattery, literature,)—have been more in number or in value than theirs. The same dull round of routine employments,—the same homely and household pursuits,—the same unintellectual society,—the same sort of stupid husbands,

whose highest ambition is to breed stupendously fat cattle for the county agricultural exhibition, make dull speeches at a vestry meeting, look consequential on the Bench at Quarter Sessions, or dine at an inn with the county Member,—the same sort of bullet-headed children, with white locks and chubby cheeks,—the same petty rivalries,—the same humdrum society, from year's end to year's end, have been the lot of my contented sisters, and on that lot they have vegetated very happily. It is exceedingly fortunate that all people have not the same tastes. Such a life as they have led, poor things, would kill me in a week.

Eight of my sisters were taken off my father's hands,—you perceive that I can use the true market phrase,—before I was quite fifteen. I was the ninth, and the youngest, by some years. When all the rest had been disposed of, literally to the best bidders, I was yet such a mere child in years, thought, and appearance, that matrimony was a goal to which, for some time at least, my steps were

not to be directed. Perhaps, as I was the youngling of the flock, I was kept on hand a little longer, in the hope of being the more advantageously disposed of. Perhaps my youth would have been no great impediment to my "settlement in life,"—how convenient are the terms!—if my mother had not died suddenly, greatly to my sorrow, for I very dearly loved her. This event made a great change at home, and I was sent to a boarding-school near Derby, until farther orders.

We knew very little of Sir Edward Morton, the distant relative to whom my father intended that the estate should revert, than that he was very old, very rich, and very eccentric. On the formal announcement of my mother's death, he sent a letter of condolence, courteous, kind, and formal, in which he requested particular information respecting the domestic affairs of our family, and intimated a desire that, connected as we were in blood, we should also be connected in friendship.

My father replied, in his usual frank and hearty manner, that it should not be his fault

if the friendship thus solicited were not freely formed and fostered. From this there followed such an interchange of compliments, that, some six months after the commencement of the correspondence, Sir Edward Morton invited my father to visit him at his seat in Yorkshire.

The visit was paid, and each father must have loudly sounded the praises of his child, for they agreed that the estates should be united by the bond matrimonial. I was fluttered and flattered at receiving an intimation that I was to proceed forthwith to Morton Hall, where my father still remained. I had a vague suspicion that something in the marriage-line was on the *tapis*, for my father's recent letters had been brimful with praises of Mr. Henry Morton, the only child of his host. These praises must have been wholly on hearsay, for the young gentleman was then on the Continent.

I was received at Morton Hall affectionately, as if I were Sir Edward's daughter, instead of his guest. Women have a sort of freemasonry by which we know when we are favourites, and I saw, at once, that I was on

the high-road to the old Baronet's heart. He was so kind, so considerate, so generous, that I must have been cold and ungrateful indeed, if I did not seek to repay him by all the attentions in my power.

Soon after my arrival, I was summoned to a cabinet council in the library, where, after a preliminary harangue of half-an-hour's length, my father informed me that Sir Edward and himself had agreed that Henry Morton should marry me, and that it was expected I should be rejoiced at this arrangement. Sir Edward drew me towards him, and kindly kissed my forehead, adding a few words to the effect that he knew my disposition was exactly similar to that of his dear son, and that this greatly relieved his mind, by giving him the assurance that the union would be a happy one. The gentlemen quite forgot that neither of the contracted parties had yet seen the other. But in a family compact of this kind, there is little consideration for the feelings or affections,—it is simply a matter of convenience, and not an affair of the heart.

I usually have a good memory,—yet I now forget what reply I gave to this matrimonial proposal. Perhaps I gave none,—perhaps none was expected,—perhaps I did not then quite comprehend what was told me. At any rate, the affair was considered as fixed, and I was sent back to school, a betrothed damsel, loaded with presents.

A few months after, I was suddenly summoned home. My father was on his death-bed, and I arrived in time to see him die, and receive his blessing. Although he was rather a negative character in society, as a man, I had ever found him a kind and affectionate parent, and the tears which I shed for him were neither few nor unmerited.

On his will being read, it appeared that he had annually laid by a considerable portion of his income, and this accumulation, divided among my sisters, was some consolation to them for the remaining provisions of the bequest, which were to the effect that, by mutual agreement between Sir Edward Morton and my father, it had been determined

that Henry Morton should become the husband of Isabella Charlton—that he should tender his hand to me within one year after his father's death—and, that, in the event of either party neglecting, or declining to make, or accept such offer matrimonial, the united estates were to become the sole property of the other. If the gentleman neglected or declined to become my suitor, he was to be cut off with an annuity of £300 a year—if the negative came from me, I was to have the same amount for my yearly income. To prevent the possibility of any thing like a compromise, there was a proviso by which one party was prohibited from adding anything to the income of the other. All this would have been of little use in a mere will, for it was clear that my father could not control the manner in which Sir Edward Morton might choose to dispose of his own property, but there had been a bond between the two parties, by which, under heavy penalties of forfeiture, the compact was firmly made. Very soon after this, Sir Edward Morton also died, and *his* 'last will and testament,' was found to

correspond, in these essential parts, with that of my father. Intent on the fulfilment of their wishes, they had taken care to provide for that fulfilment by all that the law could render most binding. In their eyes, the union of the estates was all important—for the union of hearts they had made no provision.

Here, then, was I, at the age of sixteen, conditionally an heiress, and conditionally betrothed. I was engaged to a man whom I had never seen, and if he had the option of asking me to be his wife, I had the power, on the other hand, of saying "no."

Sir Henry Morton speedily returned to England, and was little pleased to find on what conditions, and with what a prospective burthen, his paternal estates were bequeathed to him. For my own part, I was not in the least surprised at learning, as I afterwards did, that he had taken legal advice upon his father's will. I am so little of a lawyer, that I may, probably, make a confusion of terms, but I believe that, some short time before he quitted England on his Continental tour, he had joined

in what is called "docking the entail," a process by which, if I am not misinformed, he gave his father the power to alienate the landed property as he pleased. Poor Sir Henry!—he was in no very pleasant dilemma. His legal advisers told him that it would be useless to attempt to dispute the validity of his father's will, nor am I quite sure that he would have done it if he could. His chagrin, however, was by no means concealed.

Did he dislike me? No—he had never seen me—scarcely knew, until now, that such a being was in existence. But his feelings were romantic—his mind was imaginative—his sensibility acute, and it, therefore, is not surprising that he had a horror of being compelled to marry "per order," as the tradesmen have it. He did not attempt to conceal his dissatisfaction, and, through one friend or another, I was not long in ignorance of his avowed intention of *not* soliciting my hand. What an affront!—not to let *me* have the credit and pleasure of refusing *him*. I do not think that, after all, I was half so much displeased as I

ought to have been with this rumour of the young baronet's spirit. I am confident I should have heartily despised him, had he made up his mind, as some of his sex would have done, to take the estates, with myself as the encumbrance. From the moment I heard that he vowed he would see me only once, to tell me that he would not become my suitor, he rose rapidly in my esteem.

The singular provisions of the two wills were publicly known, and, as it was rumoured that she might come into a large fortune, the little brunette, who had been at Madame Le Plaisir's "establishment," for twelve months past, without attracting any attention, became the "cynosure of neighbouring eyes," all at once, —that is, as much as a parlour boarder well could be. As if by a miracle, it was discovered that I had bright eyes—that my figure was graceful—that my manners were refined—in a word that I was a sort of conditional heiress! Such attentions as I was paid, might have turned a wiser and an older head than mine. But, although very young, I distrusted this

novel kindness—these new friends—this new situation. Young as I was, I was singularly suspicious of flattery: therefore, though beaux stared at me in St. Alkmund's Church, and bowed to me in All Saint's, I estimated these attentions at the proper value. I was conscious that, until then, nobody had condescended to notice me, and I might rightly attribute the change to my improved prospects.

Admirers hover round an heiress, just like flies round a honey-comb. A dashing, bold, handsome fortune-hunter formed the resolution to heighten the dislike to marry me, which, it was rumoured, had sprung up in Sir Henry Morton's mind, from the injunction to offer his hand to me. This person was a Captain Smith, possessing talents and address sufficient to render the success of his scheme far from impossible. He did not contemplate my being husbandless. His idea was, if he deprived me of the spouse who was duly willed and bequeathed to me, to supply his place—in person.

Captain Smith contrived to make the acquaintance of the young Baronet. Being a

pleasant and well-informed companion, the acquaintance soon warmed into intimacy, and the intimacy duly ripened into friendship. Sir Henry had but a lonely time of it at Morton Hall, and there was nothing particularly agreeable in marrying a lady, whom he had never seen, or in relinquishing the fine estate to which he had so recently succeeded. The gallant Captain soon became so necessary to him, as a relief from his own sad thoughts, that he was quite domesticated at the Hall in a week or two. The Baronet made a confidant of his new friend, who, as I afterwards was told, did not draw my character in the most flattering terms. On the contrary, he neglected no opportunity of heightening the feeling against me, and had not very much difficulty in persuading Sir Henry, that he could live much more happily on £300 a year without me, than on a yearly income of £14,000, burthened with such an incumbrance as myself. What people wish, they readily believe, and if there had not existed a strong bias against me, Sir Henry could not have been so persuaded.

Captain Smith was careful never to *say* anything directly to my prejudice—but he was a very *insinuating* man! I was condemned by implication and by inference. He could "hint a fault, and hesitate dislike," in the most adroit manner. He dealt out his "speechless obloquy," with perseverance and tact—carefully avoiding the making a dead set at me, as that might have induced a generous mind to champion the absent. But he contrived to let it be understood that I was plain, awkward, and imperfectly educated.

Marian Smith, only sister of the adventurer, officiated as half-pupil, half-governess, in Madame Le Plaisir's "Establishment for Young Ladies." She was a clever, shrewd, showy girl—exactly such an one as might easily become a knowing *intriguante* in love or politics. She was naturally good-natured, and, some time before I had become an orphan, had taken a fancy to me, and had treated me with an affectionate and disinterested kindness, for which I was very grateful, the more so, I suppose, because such attentions were rare at

the time. When, from the mere nobody I had been, fortune elevated me into a sort of somebody, with high expectations, every body seemed anxious to distinguish me, but I turned a deaf ear to their blandishments, somewhat haughtily, I fear, and my only school-friend was Marian Smith, who had been kind to me when no interested motive could have influenced her. Accordingly we were Damon and Pythias in petticoats.

In this, she had a great advantage over me : —she was nearly ten years my senior ; and, from this, as well as my position in the school, I had been accustomed to look up to her with a strong degree of reliance. So, when Captain Smith began to manœuvre for my hand and the rich acres, his sister was one of the best instruments he could employ.

There could not have been a better confederate. She had good cards in her hand, and she played them well. She had all the arts of a practised tactician, and the chiefest of them was the concealment that she had any. She glided into my confidence, — unsuspiciously

extolling the manifold virtues of her brother, —blaming him for an utter want of selfishness which had often interfered with his worldly interests—gently condemning his romantic enthusiasm — commenting in most pitying terms on the horrid necessity of being compelled to marry a man whom I had not yet seen—insinuating that he had spoken slightly of me, and, after that, could seek my hand for nothing but the fortune it would carry with it. All this was conveyed in such a tone of sympathy and sorrow, and with such an apparent sincerity, arising out of a deep wish for my happiness, that even watchful suspicion would have been disarmed of its apprehensions. It easily imposed upon me, knowing no guile, nor thinking that one who called herself my friend could practise it.

No wonder that all this had much of its intended effect. I was slightly predisposed against Sir Henry, on account of the peculiar position in which we were relatively placed; and what I heard of his avowed dislike to our union, together with hints as to engagements

and excesses on the Continent, was not very unwelcome to me, as it seemed, in some manner, to justify the prejudice which floated in my mind. The soil was well prepared for the seed; and dear Marian Smith was a cunning cultivator.

Her brother sometimes came to pay a flying visit to her; and it was usually contrived that I should be present during part of the interview. On these occasions, whenever Sir Henry Morton was alluded to, the subject was dismissed with the significant "shrug and sigh" which, in their very silence, spoke a great deal.

All this had made me half determine to have the gratification of refusing the hand of Sir Henry, if it should be proffered. But the Smiths had no wish that such should be the issue of the adventure. They believed that it would not require any very difficult management to throw the rejection upon *him*. This done, the Captain was to make an effort to obtain my hand for himself, and what he desired more than that, my broad lands also. The

man had many things in his favour besides his appearance and manners—but his chief instrument would have been the influence upon my mind quietly exercised by his sister. It was unseen and unsuspected—strong though secret. It is probable that success might have fully crowned their scheming, but for a slight accident, on which they had not calculated.

You may recollect my mentioning its being provided, by the double wills, that Sir Henry Morton must marry me within twelve months after his father's death. That period had now so very nearly elapsed, that my guardians, who had no doubt that the marriage would take place, in due course, sent for me—thinking that Sir Henry might not wish to woo and win his bride under the *surveillance* of the "bread-and-butter misses" of a boarding school. The announcement came on me so very suddenly, and my removal was effected so very promptly, that, my dear Marian Smith being accidentally absent, I had no opportunity of taking council with her.

My Uncle, who was one of my guardians,

did me the honour of coming for me, and taking me with him to his house. He was a plain-spoken gentleman, full of the idea that he was very facetious, and that any boarding-school young lady must enjoy unequivocal satisfaction in the approach of marriage. He therefore managed to make my journey very uncomfortable by a series of jokes upon my approaching "change of condition." Smiles and frowns—protestations and silence—were alike in vain. My very tears failed to disarm him. He put every thing down to "a little modesty, my dear, very natural to your situation, and becomes you exceedingly."—I never was so tormented before nor since.

When our journey was ended, I found, most happily and fortunately for me, that my aunt was of a very different character. She was shrewd, considerate, sensible, and sympathising. She had mixed with the world, but this had quickened all her womanly sensibilities. Without my perceiving that I was subjected to the process, she drew from me some idea of my feelings, and neither frowned nor smiled,

scolded nor ridiculed me, when I told her that I had no inclination to marry Sir Henry Morton, if he were to ask me, and that I believed I should be much happier if I never married at all.

My aunt, who looked at events with the resolve to trace them back to their causes, had the tact to ascertain how my prejudices against Sir Henry had been developed and encouraged. "It is well," said she, with a smile, "that this dangerous Marian Smith is not with you just now. I know, from authority indisputable, that her clever brother has been acting much the same part by Sir Henry Morton. It is not very difficult to surmise the motives of this double game. Perhaps, too, my dear, there may be a little pique in your mind at Sir Henry's having let so many months pass by without making an effort to see you."——I protested, of course, against such inferences, and defended Marian Smith, with zeal, if not with eloquence. But I saw that my aunt was incredulous.

It now wanted only six weeks of the expiration of *our* year, and—though I *was* annoyed

at the indifference with which he treated me, just as if he was ignorant of the existence of such a being—I began to cherish hopes that Sir Henry would not come to ask my hand. I ventured to hint as much to my aunt, and her reply set my spirits in a flutter; "My dear child, you will see Sir Henry in due time. He *does* come. He will be at your cousin's next week, and we shall see him in due course, so make up your mind to be 'wooed, and married, and a'' in due season."

One of those irrepressible impulses which sometimes influence us, now came into my mind. Hitherto, I had been persuaded, and had persuaded myself, that I cared as little for Sir Henry, as he for me. Now, I felt as if I would give all the world to conquer his indifference. My aunt saw, by the changeful expression of my countenance, that something like a heart-quake was heaving below, and she frankly told me that though she did not solicit my confidence, she hoped and believed that, if I did confide in her, some good might be the result. "I have no daughter," said she, "but

I think that if I had, I could not feel more interested about her, than I am about you at this moment." I threw my arms around her neck, and whispered, "I have never seen Sir Henry. Let me judge of him, myself unknown. I have long promised to spend a week with my cousin —let me go at once, under another name, so that when Sir Henry arrives there, he may find me one of the family, and thus make my acquaintance, without his knowing or suspecting who I am."

"My dear child," said my aunt, caressingly, "You would play the part of Miss Hardcastle, in the comedy of 'She Stoops to Conquer.' The idea is romantic, the execution difficult. If you fail, and there is a chance that you may, you are lost. And yet I would like to let you have your own way, for you have no ordinary motive. Where much is to be gained, something may be risked. Your cousin's living in a retired manner, and in a remote part of the country, where she sees few visitors, and where you have never yet been, prevents the likelihood of your incognito being discovered a

moment before your own desire that it should be. I think I may let it be as you please. I must only hope that you will play your part with as much caution as address."

This great point was gained. The next day, my aunt went with me to my cousin's, who was entrusted with the secret, and so delighted to enter into my little plot, that she confidently undertook to arrange so that, except through some imprudence of my own, no chance of untimely discovery could occur. This was the easier, as Sir Henry, who had known her from childhood, had stipulated that, being in indifferent health and spirits, his visit was to be so strictly private, that no guests or visitors were to see or meet him.

He visited Oatlands, therefore, without the remotest idea of beholding me there. That I was in the neighbourhood, he knew. His friend, Captain Smith, with more delicacy than I had given him credit for, did not accompany him—indeed, he was not invited. *His* coming would have spoiled every thing.

I felt ashamed, deeply ashamed of my own

credulity, and very suspicious of Marian Smith's motives, when I saw the Baronet. He was then about three-and-twenty, tall and slight in figure, with the air of a man of fashion, and that innate gentleness of manner, which more than any thing else, may be said to be peculiar to gentle blood. When I looked at his handsome face, met the gaze of his expressive eyes, glanced at his well-shaped forehead, with its whiteness well relieved by his dark-brown hair, and heard his low and musical voice, I confess that, like Mr. Acres' courage, my prejudice against him began to "ooze out at my fingers' ends."

He was just such a man as the quick fancy of "sweet seventeen" might reverence as a hero, or idolize as a lover. How shamefully had he been slandered! His intellectual attainments were at least equal to those of any man whom I had ever met. His knowledge of books had been corrected and aided by his knowledge of life. Travel had not been thrown away upon him; he had not only seen, but observed and remembered. He appeared

at home on every subject, and yet, even when he was led to exhibit his knowledge, he did not parade it. He was entirely free from foppery, yet always well-dressed. His personal attractions, considerable as they were, must be taken as the smallest of his merits. His subdued manner, the thoughtfulness that rested upon his brow, and in the depth of his dark eyes, the sweetness of his voice, the earnest eloquence of his words, the purity of his taste, all made him an acquaintance much too interesting. With me it may not have been love at first sight, but it was something very like it.

He considered me, as he was told, a mere nobody ; an orphan girl visiting at his cousin's, because she had no home of her own. He very soon laid aside the reserve with which he met a stranger, and we became good friends without loss of time. His melancholy sometimes brightened into smiles, as he listened to the lively sallies which fell from my lips ; for I know not how, while my actual spirits were at *zero*, my seeming spirits were as high as fever-heat. We walked together, we talked together,

we read together, until, at last, the flush on his cheek, and the flashing of his eye, and the deepening tenderness of his voice, when in my company, made me suspect that my task was over. I had long since mastered my own foolish prejudices; I now trusted that I had gained a friend, and won a lover.

At last came the time to part. I must return to my uncle's house, for the year named in my father's will would terminate in a few days. As time had passed on, Sir Henry had sunk deeper and deeper into melancholy, or rather into gloom, and I could perceive that, of late, my society had but tended to augment it.

I had been introduced to him as a portionless and almost friendless orphan. Another day, and he would see me as myself. But how would the discovery affect him? Would he think lightly of the deception? or was it not more probable that his delicacy would revolt from her who had sought to make his heart the object of an experiment? With such conflicting thoughts, I was almost as much disturbed as himself.

The crisis arrived. I was sitting alone in the drawing-room, when Sir Henry entered. He took his seat by my side, and, for a time, both were silent. But words soon came quick and thronging; for, when the heart is full, it *will* speak. He said—

"You leave us, Isabella. You will leave regrets behind you:—will you regret those whom you leave? Before you go, let me tell you how much I love you. Nay, do not shrink. Your colour changes, and you tremble. Pity me, if you will not pardon."

He took my hand, and—I could not withdraw it. I *felt* that he was looking into my eyes—I knew that they were wet with tears; and then—there is no occasion for telling all the details, but I believe that his fingers began to play with my curls, that his lip was pressed to my cheek. I knew—and the sensation was exquisite—that I did not love without return. Trembling and blushing, I felt it right to repress the very warmth which was so delightful. I arose to adjust the window-blind, and took my seat not quite so close to him as

before. It now was my turn to speak, and I had still to manœuvre a little, though I grieved at the necessity of continuing the deception.

"I can forgive this weakness," said I; "let both of us try to forget it. To you it can matter little what, in after life, may become of me. You will yet think of me, perhaps, as one who has contributed to amuse your idle hours —to divert your thoughts from *ennui* or gloom. You will forget the friendless orphan, the acquaintance of a few brief weeks, whose youth may have been her greatest charm,—and it is only right that you should forget her. Recollect, Sir Henry, how soon you must pay to another the devotion which you now have proffered me. Leave this place, and with it leave all thought of me—except a kindly memory, sometimes—and go hence to become, even as your father willed it, the husband of one who, far better than myself, has a claim to the right."

"By Heaven!" he exclaimed, "this will drive me mad. What right had my father to dispose of my hand without my own free choice? how could he know what would be my ideal of

a wife? how could he pretend to throw a bridle upon my warm and gushing feelings? Did he think that I was to take to a wife whom I had never seen, as I would to a picture, a hunter, a house, or an estate? No, Isabella; let the lady of his choice take the broad lands which my fathers won at the point of the sword in the olden days—let her become possessor of the stately ancestral trees which they planted a thousand years ago—let her take the old Hall in which so many generations of them were born, and have lived, and died—let the heir of an ancient line live without wealth, so that he may cherish the pure and first affection which has sprung into his heart, and ripened there. I cannot marry a woman whom I do not love —whom I have not yet even seen. The world is wide enough for honorable exertion. Enough will remain for simple maintenance, even if I decline to fulfil the unhallowed compact which our fathers made. I have hands, and I can toil—I have brains, and I can exercise them. I have health, and hope, and energy, and education; and these win fortune and make fame.

Be mine own. Share my pittance now—sustain me, by your smiles, your affection, while I make the effort to augment it; and, my life on the cast, we shall yet live with hopes brightly fulfilled. Whatever your decision, mine is made: nothing shall tempt me to an union to which I have always been opposed, but unalterably so since I have known you."

He spoke with so much eager vehemence that I could see his mind to be firmly resolved. I took that opportunity of ascertaining whether there was any personal cause for his antipathy to the marriage. I enquired, therefore, whether his objection extended to the union as a family compact, in which the parties chiefly concerned were not consulted, or whether he had any particular reason for disliking the lady.

"My objection," said he, "is upon both grounds. My faith is plighted without my knowledge—without my consent—without my having the power, which my groom claims as his right, of pleasing my own fancy in a partner for life. This, of itself, would create the

strongest spirit of opposition. But the young lady—"

"What of her?" said I, with an attempt to appear indifferent.

"What of her?—That she is as unlike you as possible. If she were not vain and pedantic—at once a coquette and a blue-stocking—I could easily pardon her want of personal attractions. I think, too, that if she possessed ordinary delicacy, she ought to have been even more angry at the attempt to marry her to one whom she had never seen, than I am. But you change colour—perhaps you are acquainted with Miss Charlton?"

"I know her," said I, with some bitterness; for, though I had expected some disparagement, I was shocked at finding my character drawn in such colours. "I know her as well as I know myself."

"I am sorry, then," said he, "that in my anger, I have said anything concerning her, that could wound you, her friend."

My reply was that it made no matter,—he had drawn her portrait, and allowed the

shadow to predominate. "It is not every artist," I added, "who, like Lawrence, can use the *couleur de rose.* It is somewhat remarkable, however, that the young lady in question should have heard much the same account of you as that which you have given of her."

"Of me?" said he, with a look and tone of surprise.

"Yes, of you. I cannot pretend to repeat half the pretty compliments respecting you, which have been carefully communicated to her, nor am I quite sure, calm as you try to look, that you would patiently bear their repetition. The least offensive were to the effect, that you are a *roué* in morals, a pretender in fashion, a clown in manners, and a gambler to desperation."

"Good Heavens!" he cried, "what a heap of imputations, and how unfounded. Surely *you* do not believe them? Gaming, I abhor. The character of a *roué*, I shall take up, when I lay aside that of a gentleman. For my manners and attainments, they are—what you see and know."

Here he drew himself up, with some stateliness, and awaited my reply. I kept silence, and he continued——

"My information respecting the lady is more true, I am afraid. My informant——"

"Was Captain Smith, whose sister drew your character for Miss Charlton, so it is likely that the misrepresentation has been mutual, and for a special purpose."

"If I thought so—"

"You would throw yourself at Miss Charlton's feet,—vow to be her *preux chevalier* for life—make sonnets to her eyebrows—look tenderly into her eyes—admire her pretty hands, and marvellously small feet—hasten to become a contented Benedict—and, with all imaginable rapidity, apply the energies of your mind to forget the world of protestations you made me just now."

"No!" said he, smiling, "that would be indeed, to prove myself the unworthy character I have been described as. My mind is made up, and my only dread is, that I may unconsciously give pain to her, whose feelings should be spared as much as possible. I shall see

Miss Charlton to-morrow—I shall resign all pretensions to her hand, with as much delicacy as I can,—and then, if you link your fate with that of a man of broken fortune, but unbroken hope, we shall think of wealth as a thing not good enough to have youth and love sacrificed for. My Isabella, you cannot say nay—you must not, if you could."

I was so much affected by this manly and honourable conduct, and by these proofs of his kind and true regard, that I scarcely durst trust myself to answer him. "It will be better for all parties," said I, "that I decline my reply until to-morrow. I believe that you are in earnest, and I am gratified at finding myself the object of such regard. Considering what my situation is, and what yours must be, if you do not become the husband of Miss Charlton, no one can doubt the disinterested nature of your proposals. But you must grant me one favour. See Miss Charlton, as you originally intended, and satisfy yourself, whether you have received an accurate description of her person and her mind. If you then

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determine to reject her hand, or rather, if you decline to offer yours for her acceptance or refusal—for, after all, she may be as reluctant as yourself—I will——"

"Be mine? Is it not so?"—I checked his raptures, for I heard the carriage wheels.

"And when, my dear Isabella, shall I see you again? You have not told me where you are going. Let me know where I can see you, after my interview with Miss Charlton."—I told him that I could not precisely tell him, but certainly he should see me, since he was so anxious, as soon as possible after his important interview of the morrow. With this promise, he was compelled to be, or to appear, content. He handed me into the carriage, and I departed for my own house, in which my guardians had arranged that Sir Henry Morton should wait upon me.

I reached home late, for I had some distance to travel, and there found my Aunt awaiting my arrival. Pleading fatigue, and not without cause, I hastily half-gratified her curiosity by saying, that all was going on favourably, and

hastened to my chamber—to think rather than repose.

The result of my experiment was to be developed on the next day. I looked forward with mingled anxiety and hope—though the latter was in the ascendant. Sometimes, I own, a chilling doubt *would* creep through my mind, that Sir Henry's rather fastidious feelings might experience disgust at the finesse I had been using. His own frank and open spirit, as I well know, had little toleration for anything like double-dealing. But when hearts were trumps, what woman would not play a bold game?

I determined that the Library should be my Hall of Audience, and, to maintain my character of a *blas bleu*, maps, books, drawings, mathematical instruments, were scattered about in most admired confusion. The floor was strewed with "learned lumber" from the shelves,—a pair of globes were on the table immediately before my seat,—a compound microscope was also visible,—a variety of plants and flowers was present, to indicate my bota-

nical pursuits,—in short, the whole apartment was in a state of learned litter, well-calculated to strengthen the impression that its occupant was, what all well-informed men heartily hate, —a vain, pedantic female.

The morning advanced,—did ever hours move more slowly? At length, Sir Henry was announced. I knew the sound of his footsteps as he paced down the passage. As the song says, there was "music in it." He approached, and I arose to receive him. As he entered, he paused at the door, and started as he caught a glimpse of my figure. I had forgotten to cover it, and now I drew my shawl around me. As for my features, he could not well distinguish them, for I had taken care to sit with my back to the window, the curtains of which were half-closed, and, for greater safety, had covered my flowing tresses with a mighty cap, adorned with a world of lace, and a little garden of artificial flowers, which had formed the once fashionable head-gear of my Aunt.

Nothing could have been more cold, more

formal, than the commencement of our *tête-à-tête*. There we sat—a pair of frozen proprieties. A few cold sentences from him—a few inaudible monosyllabic replies from me. At last he took courage, and respectfully told me that, after due consideration, he had presumed to decline the gratification and honour of presenting himself a suitor for my hand. He apologised for what he called his insensibility to my merits, but frankly said that his heart was not his own to offer. It would pain him, of course, to relinquish his paternal estates, but he was consoled by the thought that they would only pass to his next of kin, and sincerely wished that I might long live to enjoy them. For himself, he added, though he thus abandoned wealth, he had enough left for competence—the world was before him, where fortune and reputation were to be won by industry, if not by talent—and, at all events, he was happy in the belief that he could persuade the object of his affections to share his lot, whether gloomy or bright, and that, thus sustained, he was sure of happiness.

There was so much manly gentleness in this declaration—such an anxiety to avoid wounding my feelings, while doing justice to his own,—that when he was thus resigning me, I felt that I loved him more than ever.

The conflict of my feelings overpowered me. The excitement was too much. I grew faint, and sank back in my chair. Sir Henry hastily arose, and threw open the window, to give me fresh air. His touch revived me. He had admitted light as well as air, and the cap which I wore had fallen off. Could he trust his sight? Was he awake or dreaming? Conviction flashed across his mind as my Aunt entered the room. My smile told him all. He threw himself at my feet, and, you may be sure, he did not plead in vain.

What followed may readily be imagined,—explanations, and confessions, and wonderings. My Uncle had already provided a special license. My Aunt had taken care that a bridal wardrobe should not be wanting. There was no difficulty in finding a clergyman, and

so, as all comedies end with a wedding, we were married that evening.

Of the Smiths, I never heard again—I never enquired after them. As a wife, I had as much happiness as usually falls to the lot of mortals. I never had reason to repent of the success of my experiment. Even yet, though five years have elapsed since my husband's death, I cherish the memory of the affection his true heart bore for me.

Here ends my story. If it has been dull—do me the justice of remembering that I warned you, at its commencement, that it could not well be otherwise.

"And now," said the lady, "I have performed my part of this tale-telling compact, and may fairly claim a return. The Major has borne very little part in the relations which we have heard. Our young friend, Mr. Moran, has scarcely heard his own voice as yet. Lady

Tressilian, too, has literally not uttered half a dozen sentences."

"As regards the lady," responded Mr. Moran, with all the gallantry of his country, "I heard her say, last night, that she really could not summon courage to speak for ten minutes at one time, even before an audience so gracious as she would here be surrounded by. If she may perform her *devoir* by proxy, I shall be happy to narrate a story for her,—or rather, at our next meeting, to read an Irish legend which was familiar to me in my boyhood, but which, truth to say, is not quite ready yet, as I only commenced writing it last night. For my own share in contributing to the gratification of my friends, depend on it that I am more likely to speak too much than too little."

"These grave points being thus adjusted," said the Major, "I am quite prepared to obey the call. But, if I *must* tell you a story, it shall, at least, be one after my own fashion."

"After any fashion," retorted Lady Morton, "so that you *do* tell it. You men-at-arms so

frequently furnish the *matériel* for a story, that we could forgive you, or, at least, not be *very* angry, if you even advance yourself to the brevet rank of hero, and describe one of the scenes in which, at one time or other, during a life of military adventure, you must have been personally mixed up. So, gallant sir, commence."

"I am half inclined to take you at your word," said the Major, "particularly as your suggestion chimes in with my previous intention. The temptation of figuring as a hero, before such a gentle company, is a great one; but I shall have the virtue to resist it. You shall have a story in which I appear only as an accessory—a story without hero or heroine. I shall give you the history of my watch, which was made for, and once belonged to, the Empress Josephine."

With these words, he produced a gold repeater, of foreign workmanship, and apparently of considerable value. It had several curious contrivances. Among these, the most noticeable were that the dial plate could open,

when the repeater was struck, and exhibit moveable figures of the twelve signs of the Zodiac, which performed various evolutions according to the hour. Then, it could go for a great length of time without being wound in the usual manner, there being some compensating movement in the works which wound the chain up on one side, as fast as it went down on the other. Besides this, it had extra works which played two or three French tunes. Altogether, it was curious in construction, and valuable on account of that curiosity. When it had passed round, after a due examination, we thus heard its history.

II.

THE MAJOR'S STORY.

EARLY in June, 1808, being then in my sixteenth year, I was suddenly taken from school in Devonshire, in order to carry a pair of Colours for His Majesty King George III. In other words, the "Gazette" duly announced the appointment of "John Wellesley Sheldon, Gent., to be Ensign in the 28th Regiment of Foot, without purchase." At that time, when we had not entered very deeply into the Peninsular War, Commissions "without purchase" were not obtained so readily as at a later period; but my father had been in the

army, had been severely wounded in Egypt, and therefore had his claim on my behalf admitted without delay. I was considered fortunate in having been appointed to "The Slashers,"—as the 28th were called, from an early period of the American war, when they wore swords, and *used* them to some purpose.

The change which these two lines in the "Gazette" had effected, was truly wonderful. I cannot say that I had been the brightest scholar in my class, and therefore had frequently been annoyed by being told that this lad was a better translator of Homer, or that the other was more skilled in the prosody of the crabbed odes of Horace. But now, *they* were schoolboys, and *I* already fancied myself a future and honoured hero. The "Gazette" had made a man of me. I doubt which gave me greater annoyance,—the apprehension that my handsome uniform would not arrive in time to be worn and exhibited in church on the Sunday, or the doubt whether a course of industrious shaving for whiskers and a beard,

would produce the desired effect by the time I joined my regiment.

The uniform came, and very handsome and particularly becoming did I think it. But, alas for the uncertainty of worldly hopes!—there also came an order, that, on the very Sunday which I had destined me for my *début en militaire* in the village church, I should hasten to join my regiment! There was no help for it. We were ordered to go to Portugal. The other officers were even worse off than myself. The regiment had not been more than a fortnight returned from Sweden, and was ordered to proceed to sea, with the least possible delay. I joined on the 24th of July, 1808, just in time to witness a very singular scene. On that morning, there came a general order from the Horse Guards, to cut off the *queus* then worn by the men. All the hairdressers at Spithead were signalled to repair to head-quarters. When they had performed the task of curtailment there, the adjutant went with them and a pattern man to the other troop ships, where their offices

were also had recourse to. When every *queu* was cut off, the whole of them, many hundreds in number, were cast overboard by a simultaneous movement, with three hearty cheers.

On that day week we cleared away from St. Helen's, with a glorious breeze. I shall not trouble you with an account of the unpleasantness of the voyage; how we were tossed in the Bay of Biscay, quite as much as poor Sancho Panza in the blanket; how some of us were sea-sick, and all of us were crowded—with a great many other "hows," which, if put together, would suggest a variety of scenes more easily imagined than described, as novelists are fond of saying. You may take it for granted, by my being in bodily presence here, that none of the disasters of the voyage were fatal to me. On the twentieth day from our leaving England, we made the coast of Portugal. On landing at Figuiras, on the Mondego, the following day, we learned that Sir Arthur Wellesley had engaged and beaten the French at Roliça. On this, Sir John Moore ordered us to re-embark; and, on

the 21st of August, 1808, as we were sailing along the coast, we could distinctly see and hear the firing at the battle of Vimiera. Three days after, having landed at Peniche, we joined the conquerors on the field of battle. The Convention of Cintra followed (to the great disappointment of the British nation, who had expected to see a Marshal of France, and twenty thousand men, arrive as prisoners at Spithead), and we, then forming part of the first brigade, were encamped on the plains of Queluz, six miles from Lisbon. We had the mortification of seeing the French troops sail down the Tagus, taking with them all their plunder, by virtue of the terms of the Convention. At Queluz, we were reviewed and complimented by Sir John Moore, and accompanied him into Spain, wearing the Spanish cockade (of red cloth) in our hats, in addition to our own. This was in the last week of October. Shortly after, the Spaniards not giving the expected support, it was resolved to retreat, and the 28th became part of the reserve—the post of danger and of honour. From

that day, until the 16th of January, 1809, when Sir John Moore received his death-wound at Corunna, the troops endured a series of hardships, relieved occasionally by feats of individual and general gallantry. The French, in pursuit, exhibited as much cruelty as if they were mere banditti; and, as our regiment eventually became the rear-guard of the reserve, we were more immediately exposed to their ill-treatment. At last came the battle of Corunna—the death of Moore, who defeated the French, after having actually embarked his cavalry and artillery—and the return to England, after an absence of six months. In the retreat to Corunna, the regiment lost about three hundred out of eleven hundred men, and some of the officers died, from wounds and fatigue, after their return to England.

Early in July, 1809, the 28th embarked at Deal, forming part of the fatal expedition to Walcheren. Fortunately I was not one of the party. About two hundred of the regiment were in hospital at Lisbon, at the time of the advance into Spain under Sir John

Moore, and I was one of the half-dozen officers left with them. On their recovery, they formed part of a corps called the first battalion of detachments, from its consisting of a company from each of the ten best regiments in the service. This corps did good service at the passage of the Douro, on the 12th May, 1809, in the brigade commanded by Sir Edward Paget, (who lost his arm,) and at the reduction of Oporto.

But I am rather anticipating.—I am sure you do not wish me to run through the details of our campaign. It is enough to say, that Wellesley, who was appointed to the chief command of the British troops in the Peninsula, was nominated Marshal-General of the Portuguese armies—crossed the Döuro—forced Soult to abandon Oporto—moved so rapidly as to prevent the concentration of the French troops—marched upon the Alberche so threateningly as to alarm Joseph Buonaparte into acting on the defensive, aided by Marshal Jourdan and the corps of Victor and Sebastiani—and fought the battle of Talavera, on the 28th of July, 1809.

If King Joseph had taken the advice of Jourdan, and avoided a decided battle until Soult had come on the British rear, with the troops of Ney and Mortier, I will not say what the result might have been; but Victor—who was a mere *sabreur*—affirmed that he could dislodge our troops from the fine position they occupied; and as Joseph Buonaparte was afraid of being scolded by Napoleon for delaying to fight with the enemy in view, the battle was commenced, on the afternoon of July 27th, by Victor's attacking our outposts. He succeeded, and then attacked our left; but was repulsed with great loss; and so ended that day's contest. The actual battle commenced at light the next morning, and continued until mid-day, beneath a broiling sun, until, at last, the combatants on both sides gave over fighting, from sheer inability caused by actual exhaustion. The battle was suspended, and in this interval both armies re-formed their lines, replenished the ammunition waggons, and withdrew the wounded to the rear. There might then be seen men from both armies

slaking their thirst at opposite sides of the Portina rivulet, which ran through the ravine forming the British left, shaking hands across it, in acknowledgment of their sense of mutual valour, and pledging each other, from the opposite banks, out of the same vessels. This truce lasted for three hours, after which the battle was renewed, and continued until night. The French, I am told, affect to consider that we gained no victory:—I know, however, that the next morning no Frenchman was to be found on or within three leagues of the field, except the dead and the wounded: their columns retired across the Alberche during the night. It is pretty clear, also, what the issue of the battle was considered in England, for the prompt acknowledgment was that Sir Arthur Wellesley, who commanded, was created Viscount Wellington of Talavera.

The detachment of "The Slashers" had their share in this action. Nine months before, when Sir John Moore reviewed the 28th at Queluz, he had emphatically declared that our grenadier Company, consisting of 120 of the finest men

in the service, was a pattern to the British army. Some of them were present at Talavera, and fully earned the compliment. Some of our officers were wounded,—a ball brushed rapidly across my own forehead, cutting a ridge in the skin; but as I wrapped my silk handkerchief round, I was not under the necessity of leaving the field. The only inconvenience was that I had to wear this novel bandage until the wound beneath was healed. A Lieutenant named Ingram was the victim of a shot by which he suffered the loss—of a doubloon. It had been rolled up in the skirt-pocket of his coat, and a musket shot swept it away. Poor Ingram!—he died at Waterloo.

Early on the morning after the battle, I sallied out to look at the field. It was a sorry sight. The ground was strewn with the dead and the wounded. I proceeded to that spot where the brunt of the contest had taken place —where, in fact, Victor had directed his main force against our left. Here, though it had been most strictly forbidden by Sir Arthur Wellesley, the work of plunder was rapidly

and extensively proceeding. Some of our men were busy enough; but the suttling women were the more accomplished plunderers. They turned over the dead, and searched their pockets with all imaginable *sang froid.*

Some twenty or thirty yards from the main mass of plunderers, was a groupe consisting of three soldiers of my own regiment, surrounding a wounded French officer. While in the act of searching him, they had tumbled him over, rather roughly, and this restored him to consciousness. He had received several sword-wounds, swooned from loss of blood, and had remained all night on the field in that unconscious state. When I came up, I commanded the plunderers to quit their prey. They showed such a disinclination to obeying my orders, that I question whether my own life would have been quite safe, had I ventured to repeat them, if, seeing a picquet passing by at the moment, I was not thus enabled to enforce them. The French officer immediately claimed my protection, and surrendered himself my prisoner. I had him taken to my own

quarters, and paid him all attention in my power. The surgeon who examined his wounds, declared that in a few weeks all inconvenience from them would be at an end.

I speedily ascertained that my prisoner was no less a personage than General Laroche, a favourite officer of Napoleon's. On acquainting Sir Arthur Wellesley with my good fortune, he desired me to keep my prisoner safely, and readily consented to his remaining in my quarters, on his parole.

Natural gratitude on his part, and my own sympathy for his sufferings, soon united General Laroche and myself in the bonds of friendship. In time, giving me his fullest confidence, he told me that I had preserved more than his life, for that, finding his Imperial master's ambition of universal sovereignty at variance with his own republican principles, he had become anxious to embrace the first honorable opportunity of quitting the service, and, anticipating opposition and persecution from Napoleon, he had secretly realized most of his convertible property into bills on America, the whole of

which were on his person when my opportune arrival had prevented their being forcibly taken away from him. His wife and children he had already sent to the United States, at the commencement of the Campaign in Spain, and as his wife was an American by birth, he had a feasible pretext for their departure. But his own resolution was to join them, whenever he could do so with honour, and in safety, and the funds which he possessed would afford them a competence in another country.

Sir Arthur Wellesley took a defensive position on the southern line of the Tagus, immediately after the battle of Talavera, and as my prisoner was of too much importance to be left behind, he accompanied us to Portugal.

In a short time, General Laroche was completely restored to health, and in an interview with Lord Viscount Wellington (for his new honours had then become known,) took the opportunity of detailing, as flatteringly as he could, the manner in which he had become my prisoner. What further passed I know not, but Lord Wellington restored him to liberty,

on his parole not to serve during the campaign, against the British army. I was sent for at the close of the private interview, and went to Lord Wellington's quarters, in company with Lieutenant Charles Teulon, a brother officer of some two years longer service than myself. Lord Wellington in his usual curt manner—as if words, like ammunition, should not be wasted, but kept for service—complimented me on the report which my *quondam* prisoner had made of my conduct, and informed me that he was now discharged from my custody. It was then that General Laroche, taking out his watch, requested my acceptance of it, as an acknowledgement of my having preserved his life and property. Lord Wellington said, with a smile, "He can scarcely accept it for performing his duty—and humanity is as necessary to a soldier as courage—but I venture to say he will be proud to preserve such a memorial of your friendship." Thus the watch came into my possession. I had the honour of dining at head quarters that day, in company with General Laroche, and we heard, soon

after, that he had succeeded in finding a ship bound from Oporto to Philadelphia, in which he embarked. We heard, too, that he had safely rejoined his family in the United States.

As I am giving you an adventure of my own, and am not inclined to weary you by relating in detail what part my regiment took in the campaign, after the Battle of Talavera, it may be sufficient to say that we did our duty. The detachment to which I belonged joined the second battalion in the autumn of 1809,—and continued with them during the following year, until the termination of the war, entering France towards the close of 1813, and crowning all with the victory of Toulouse. In the ten months' fighting immediately preceding that contest, our regiment had nearly 800 killed and wounded.

One circumstance which occurred in the early part of the campaign has supplied the 28th with so much matter for conversation to this day, that perhaps I may be allowed to mention it. Early in the winter of 1810, when the British troops had retired within

the celebrated lines of Torres Vedras, our regiment was quartered at Bucellas, a village famous for the dinner-wine which bears its name. I never saw so much of the juice of the grape in any one place at any one time. Every house was a wine-store. Not only were the cellars and out-houses crowded with wine-vessels, but immense vats, each containing several hogsheads, were to be found in the kitchens and sitting-rooms of the houses occupied by the officers and men. Of course we paid pretty fairly for what was consumed. this being a point on which Lord Wellington was particular,—but the temptation to use this wine, whether the owner were or were not at hand to dispose of it by measure, was irresistible. Accordingly, the men used it very freely, at all times. On one occasion, the officers of our light company had invited some other officers to a wine-party, but either the consumption was greater than we anticipated, or the supply less, for our stock of wine for the evening was soon exhausted. The junior subaltern, officiating as cellar-man,

went to a large vat in the room beneath, for a fresh supply,—every one having agreed, after a good deal of critical tasting and comparing, that the wine from that particular vat was by far the best that they had drank for a long time, its peculiar merit, as I recollect, being that it was not such a thin libation as we usually got, but, to use the professional phrase, "had more body." The young officer turned the cock, and, as no wine ran, reported that the vat was dry. As I had drawn off wine only a few hours before, and knew that nobody could subsequently have had access to the vessel, I affirmed that there *must* be an abundant supply. We resolved, therefore, to let down a camp-kettle through a huge trap-door in the top of the vat. We had some difficulty in filling it, and while doing so, made a discovery which, rather than break in upon the hilarious enjoyment of the party, we kept to ourselves until the next day: we found that the obstacle in the wine-vat was a British drummer, in full regimentals,—pack, haversack, and all,—floating in the wine. He

had been missing for some days, and there was a suspicion that he had deserted. He had probably gone to the vat to fish for some wine, for his pitcher was found attached to his hand by a bit of string, and, losing his balance, had fallen through the trap in the cover. For a long time, we used to speak of the excellence of our "Drummer Wine,"—and though the officers declined taking any more of it, the men gave Christian burial to the drowned drummer, and made no scruple in drinking the remainder of the liquor, continuing enthusiastic in praise of its superiority, years after the incident occurred.

When the campaign concluded, we returned home, and landed at the Cove of Cork, early in July, 1814. By this time I was in the list of Captains, and, though I had received several wounds, had fortunately escaped all material injury. I need scarcely say how grateful Irish hospitality was to us after the hardships we had encountered. My watch and myself were in equal request. One of my friends had boasted that, with my own hand,

I had captured one of Napoleon's Generals, who had presented me with a wonderful combination of mechanical contrivances in the shape of a watch, which did all but speak, and I was compelled, at least a dozen times every evening, to produce the watch, to strike the repeater, to make the dial open, to exhibit the moving figures, and to bring the musical works into play.

It is impossible to say whether the machinery or my own patience would first have been worn out, if the escape of Napoleon from Elba, and its consequences, had not again called the 28th into active service—just at the moment, too, when it was *en route* for Bermuda. We reached Ostend about the middle of May, 1815, pushed forward to Ghent by the canal boats, and there found Louis XVIII. in the old palace of the Emperor Charles V. Early in June, the Duke reviewed us on the Allée-Verte, at Brussels. Immediately after, we formed part of the 5th, or Fighting division, under Sir Thomas Picton.

The inhabitants of Brussels treated us most

kindly; but there came constant rumours of Napoleon's advance with an overpowering force; and it was clear that the citizens would have been very glad if the British troops were anywhere, at that time, but with them. In the afternoon of the 15th of June, the Duke learned, by a courier from Blucher, that the French were already far advanced across the frontier, into the space between the British and Prussian cantonments, while he had believed Napoleon and his army scarcely to have left Paris. Napoleon's design was to separate the British and Prussian armies, and to attack them, one after the other, with his whole force. And thus he fought and beat the Prussians at Ligny, on the 16th of June. The Duke had accepted an invitation to a very brilliant ball from the Duchess of Richmond's, at Brussels, on the evening of the 15th, to which a great many of the English officers were invited. Unwilling to alarm the inhabitants, the Duke of Wellington, who had received certain information that the Prussians could not successfully resist the French, quietly sent orders

through the cantonments, that the troops should be in readiness to concentrate at Quatre Bras; at the same time, he determined to attend the ball himself, with his officers, which he did, with his usual calmness and coolness and thus prevented the suspicion of peril being so near. At this ball, his Grace received intelligence of the actual commencement of hostilities by Napoleon.

It has been said, that the Duke was either dilatory or surprised. But when Marshal Blucher's first courier arrived, there was not enough known of Napoleon's movements and intentions, to warrant any counter-movement by our troops. It was then very doubtful whether he meant to attack the British by the road of Mons, or the Prussians (as he did) by that of Charleroi. The second courier's despatches solved the doubt, and the concentration and march of our army took place accordingly.

I was one of the company at the ball, and, quietly retired, with the rest, hurrying to quarters to change my full dress for equipments better suited to the hard service of war. This

done, I hastened to the Park, where the gallant 28th were already mustering under arms. As we were momently expecting orders to "march," my friend, Charles Teulon, asked me what was the hour. I felt for my watch—*the* watch—but it was gone! I remembered having left it on the table when I was changing my dress, and could not be persuaded, even at the risk of being absent from my men when the order to march should be given, from hastily returning to my quarters, in search of my treasure. It was gone. Search was in vain; and, running back to the Park, I was barely in time to accompany my regiment, which had just received Picton's orders to advance.

At four o'clock on the morning of the 16th of June, we left Brussels by the Porte de Namur, and marched in the direction of Genappe. We had a short halt, and a hasty breakfast, in the forest of Soigny. Scarcely had we finished, when a brisk cannonade was heard in the distance. We instantly fell in, moved on in high spirits, and were the first to reach the

place of rendezvous. Then, while Blucher was contending with Napoleon at Ligny, our Wellington was combating Ney at Quatre Bras. There was no battle on the next day. Both armies were preparing for the encounter on the 18th of June. Wellington fell back on Waterloo. In the battle there, as at Quatre Bras, we had to repel the furious charges of the enemy, and doggedly maintain our position until the close of the day. On each day, the French cavalry repeatedly charged us; but our regiment always received and repulsed them in square. On one of these occasions, at Waterloo, Sir Thomas Picton, who was in the centre of the hollow square, shouted out, "Twenty-eighth, if I live to see the Prince Regent, I shall tell him of your bravery this day!"—but he found a glorious death on that field of fame, as he was heading a charge.

It was about eight o'clock on the evening of "the day of Waterloo," that a group of officers, of whom I was one, stood beneath the tree close to which Picton fell. One of them,

a brave fellow, named Clarke, said to me, "Ah, Sheldon, we have escaped this time!" I replied that we had, and to my surprise, as I never yet had been in a pitched engagement, without receiving some wound. While I was speaking, a shell (certainly one of the last fired on that field) fell, and burst among us. One of the splinters wounded Clarke so mortally, that he died at Brussels, three days after. His comrades inscribed his name, with the names of Major Meacham and Lieutenant George Ingram, all of whom had died from wounds on the 18th of June, on a marble slab erected in the little church of Waterloo. The same explosion which killed my friend Clarke, did not spare me—my right arm was shattered.

What followed, I know not. Some days after the battle, I found myself in a house at Brussels, carefuly and kindly attended. I fancied, as I lay in a state between sleep and watchfulness, that I saw General Laroche bending over me. Nor was I mistaken. It was himself, indeed. I was beneath his roof,

and there I remained till my wound was nearly healed.

He told me that, after Napoleon's first abdication, his heart yearned for his country, and that he had returned from America, with his family. In the unsettled state of France, at and after the Restoration, he deemed it politic to take up his residence at Brussels. There he had lived for some months, in comparative seclusion, with his happy family. After the battle of Waterloo, all the private houses in Brussels were put in requisition for the wounded; and, by a curious chance—if there can be such a thing as chance—his hospitality had been challenged for myself.

Were this a romance, instead of a very simple story, it would not be difficult to become pathetic over the truly affecting scene of my introduction to his family, by General Laroche, as the officer who had saved his life after the Battle of Talavera. You may be sure that I was much touched by the grateful expression of thanks which this kind household conveyed to me by word, look, and action.

They considered and treated me rather as a near and dear kinsman, than a stranger in blood, language, and country.

I had been two months in Laroche's house before I could summon courage to announce the loss of his splendid *souvenir*, which had been doubly valuable to me from the associations connected with it. At length, as it happened, the subject was introduced by himself. "As I have not seen the watch with you," said he, "may I presume that it has been transferred to the safe custody of a fairer hand? Since I parted from you, in Spain, have you espoused another mistress than glory?"—I told him how I had lost his gift.—"Well," said he, as your English proverb says, 'watches were made to go'; and yours has gone. I must own that I am sorry for it, for it was a gift to myself from the Empress Josephine, and to none but the preserver of my life would I have given it. *N'importe:*—it is but the fortune of war. We must find you another watch."—"This time," said Madame Laroche, "permit me to supply it. Wear mine," and here she took

her watch from her side, "I shall lend it to you until your own is restored to you."—"There is little prospect of that," I answered.—"Nay," said she, smiling, "I am something of a seer, and have a *presentiment* that you have not lost the Empress's watch for ever. It will come back some day; and, after all, you will even dispose of it as the general hinted when he gave it to you. When you wish to take a bride, present her with the watch—if she accept it, she will accept you, after she has heard your story, and value it, not only as having once belonged to an Empress who was as amiable as she was charming, but as the gift of one brave man to another."—Shortly after this, I was pronounced well enough to join my regiment, which had gone forward to Paris.

We were very much diminished by the casualties of the brief but brilliant campaign in Belgium. The whole strength of the corps was reduced to four companies, who entered Paris under the command of a Captain—the men's clothes were ragged from bullets and sabre-cuts,—the colour-staffs had been shot to

pieces, one of them was two yards long, the other only one. Early in August, however, by which time I had rejoined them, "The Slashers" had received new clothing from England, and made quite a respectable appearance. Shortly after, the Duke reviewed the whole of the British army on the plains of St. Dennis, and there exhibited to the Allied Sovereigns the evolutions of the battle of Salamanca, one of his most splendid achievements. Our regiment particularly engaged the attention of the Emperor Alexander, who loudly expressed his admiration of our Grenadier Company, which was certainly one of the finest in the service. Two things excited his curiosity—he was anxious to know why we had brown calfskin packs, and why we bore the number of the regiment on the back as well as the front of our caps. The answer was that we had found the packs in a French store which we captured in Egypt, and that we bore the distinctive badge in our caps to commemorate a circumstance which occurred in Egypt at the Battle of Alexandria, on the day of Aber-

crombie's death, when, being attacked by infantry in front, and by cavalry in rear, the rear-ranks went to the right about, delivered their fire, and the assailants were totally repulsed on all sides.

The regiment returned to England in the November after the Battle of Waterloo, and subsequently went to the Ionian Islands, where they remained until March 1829.

With your permission, I shall pass the long interval between the battle of Waterloo, and the summer of 1829. The wound which I received at Waterloo, though it did not cause the loss of my right arm, caused me great pain during many years, during which I was so entirely deprived of its use that I had to write with my left hand—a feat in which practice soon made me perfect. Meanwhile, I had obtained my majority, and had been made Companion of the Bath. Active service, too, was certainly at an end. I had succeeded to some landed property, by the death of near relatives; and these things, together with my shattered health, induced me to retire on half-

pay in November 1817, and turn my sword into a ploughshare.

I had made arrangements to leave England for Brussels, on the 15th of June, 1828—the anniversary of my beautiful watch's disappearance. My old friend, General Laroche, had been my guest in Devonshire several times since we parted after Waterloo, and I was now bound on a return visit to him, and to assist, as our across-the-channel neighbours term it, at the marriage of his eldest daughter. My seat had been taken in the Dover mail, and I was rapidly walking from the City to Charing Cross, when I noticed a quantity of cheap watches, and a low-priced set of the Waverley Novels in the window of a pawnbroker's shop on the right-hand side of the Strand, a few doors beyond Holywell-street. As my servant had given me a few pounds, a short time before, with which to buy a watch for him, I stepped into the shop to make the purchase. A great variety was exhibited, but I was rather hard to please, as I wished to get a good one, at a somewhat higher price than my man had

named, by making up the difference out of my own pocket. Having selected a watch, and duly paid for it, the vender, who saw that I had gold and notes in my purse, said he should like to tempt me with a beautiful specimen of workmanship which he could sell at a low rate. He produced a drawer full of gold watches, and took from the heap, one which was carefully laid up in a chamois bag. He drew it from its cover, and exhibited—my long-lost Talavera relic.

I was so prudent as not to indicate, by gesture or word, the pleasure and surprise I experienced at thus seeing my old and valued watch, after an absence of thirteen years. I examined it as carefully as if I had never seen it before—taking good care *not* to touch the repeating spring, *not* to move the dial, and *not* to make the music play. I opened it, to satisfy myself that it indeed was my own, and on the inside I saw the initials J. W. S., and the date 1809, which I had rudely scratched on the inner case with my penknife. Thus the identity was unquestionable. The difficulty

was—how to recover it. The man who offered it for sale demanded thirty guineas, and said that about twelve years before, he had advanced fifteen guineas on it, to a person, whom he described so accurately, as to leave no doubt that he was my own servant, who had been missed after the battle, and was believed to have fallen. There could be little question that the rascal had found the watch in my quarters at Brussels (for I remembered having left it on the table,) and had decamped with it. The money-lender, who believed it to be simply a repeater set round with gems, had made an advance upon it of about one-tenth of the actual value.

Having quitted the shop, I slowly walked down the Strand, musing on the best means of recovering my watch, doubting whether I could claim it as stolen property, and half-determined to return and pay the sum demanded for it. A gentleman hastily ran up against me. He paused to apologize, and I recognized my friend Charles Teulon. I took his arm, and enquired what chance had brought him to

town? He told me that nearly three years before, he had exchanged on the half-pay of the 42nd, having determined to marry and settle down. "The 28th," said he, "have just returned from Corfu, and our old friend, Major Cadell, who led them into Paris, and now holds their command at Ireland, has pressed me so much to go over and pay them a visit that *Madame ma femme* has given me leave of absence for three weeks, and I have just been to the Golden Cross, Charing Cross, to secure a seat in the Bristol Mail, and shall start this evening."

It was a singular combination of circumstances, that I should have discovered the *locale* of General Laroche's watch on the very day thirteen years it had been lost —that the only man, except the Duke of Wellington (who, no doubt, had quite forgotten the matter,) who was present when it was presented to me, was Major Teulon, whom I had not seen for nearly eleven years —and that I should have accidentally met him within five minutes of the time, and within

a hundred yards of the place where I had found my property.

Teulon went to the shop, purchased the Waverley novels as a feint, made a pretext for looking at the watch, carefully examined it, and came back to me with the assurance that it really was none other than my own.

I was acquainted with Sir Richard Birnie, and, going to him at Bow-street, asked his advice. He said that my best plan would be to purchase the watch, as the law could not help me to it, without money, after such a lapse of years. I went back, therefore, stated under what circumstances I had lost it, and was so fortunate as to recover it for five-and-twenty pounds, which I paid with a great deal of pleasure.

Thus, after some curious adventures, I regained my watch. In less than forty-eight hours after that, I was seated in the dining-room of General Laroche, at Brussels. I had the forbearance not to tell my story on *that* day—reserving it for the next, the anniversary of the contest at Waterloo, after which my

friend had revived me, wounded, unconscious, and apparently dying. I was even so ungallant as not to appear to hear when Madame Laroche enquired whether I had heard of *the* watch.

Next evening came the marriage. At the little feast which followed, Laroche proposed my health, as one to whom he owed life and happiness. It was expected that I should say a few words. The silence was broken by the watch. I held it under the table in a wine-glass, to increase the sound, and made it suddenly play the well-remembered air of "*Henri Quatre.*" Some one said, "it is a musical box," but Madame Laroche exclaimed, "No! —it is the watch!" Then it was handed round, examined, and admired—and I told how I had obtained, lost, and recovered it. And I saw tears in bright eyes, at the thought of the perils of war which the owners of the watch had successively gone through. Finally, I restored to Madame Laroche the watch she had lent me, at Brussels, in 1815, and confessed that her *presentiment* was true, after all; and then, as an old friend who had known and

petted her as a child, I threw round the neck of the bride a chain to which was attached one of our English watches—the best, be assured, that I could procure.

This ends my story. I am afraid you will think I have been wasting time on personal adventures of no interest, except to those actually concerned, but the facts are all true to the letter.

"You have made an excellent story of them," said the fair Widow, "but it wants a heroine."

"She is yet to come," replied the Major, in a confidential manner. "You may recollect that though I have long since returned to Madame Laroche the watch she lent me at Brussels, my story is yet incomplete for want of a *dénouement*. Will you condescend to supply it by becoming the owner—"

"Of the watch?"

"And its master:—unfortunately, it must

be clogged with that condition, as I ventured to tell you last autumn, at Weisbaden, when I did not anticipate the pleasure of meeting you here."

Their eyes met. I am confident that the lady blushed. She softly said, "What nonsense!" and did not look angry.

The watch lay upon the table, where it had been placed at the commencement of the story, when it had passed from hand to hand, and all had examined. The lady took it up, as if half unconsciously. "It is much too handsome," said she, *sotto voce*, "for a gentleman to wear. There would be too much of the *petit-maitre* in a man's constantly carrying about him such an ornament as this, rich with gems, too."

"You will recollect," responded the Major, "that it was made for, and worn by, an Empress."

"I would prize it more," said she, "because, to quote Madame Laroche's words, it was the gift of one brave man to another."

There was encouragement in this. What next the Major said I did not hear, for I was a

little distance off, though between them and the rest of the party, and I did not wish to become an involuntary confidant. But the lady blushed a second time, looked down for a moment, then raised her bright eyes full upon the Major's face, and only said—"Perhaps."

That is not a very long word, nor a very strong word, nor, indeed, a word usually expressing any thing but a degree of doubt. But the Major appeared to think it a very satisfactory word, for he took the lady's hand, and raised it to his lips. I am not sure that he did not squeeze that little hand—I am certain that he kissed it. And then he attempted to throw the chain over her neck—probably to show how gracefully he had performed the same feat when presenting General Laroche's daughter with *her* watch; but the Widow, at that moment, caught a glance from Lady Tressilian, and, exclaiming, "Not yet," hastily ran across the lawn, took her friend's arm, and presently I saw them, in a very confidential manner, talking to each other as they walked in that part of the garden which stretches out so

beautifully at the back of the hotel. Soon after, Lady Tressilian cast a glance toward the lime-tree, by which the Major continued to stand, and playfully shook her head at him. Very speedily he joined the two ladies, and, from all that occurred—for even looks may sometimes count as occurrences—I formed a decided opinion, which I left for Time to confirm or defeat, that, before long, the watch would change ownership, the lady change her name, and the Weisbaden acquaintance end in depriving the Major of his liberty—for life.

When the trio returned, Lady Tressilian smiled very significantly at her husband, Lady Morton appeared somewhat conscious, and the Major's look was extremely triumphant. What could all this denote, except that one lady had a secret in which the other was concerned, and that the gentleman, by some means or other, was also a party involved, and proud or happy at being so?

Fortunately for the trio, just at this moment sounded "that tocsin of the soul—the dinner bell." There was a simultaneous scattering of

the whole party, to perform the duties of the toilet. In due time was the reassembling—the repast—the agreeable interchange of courtesy and compliment, and, to crown all, the pleasant conversation, which gave a charm to the whole. Bye and bye, Lady Tressilian expressed a desire that the story-telling of the ante-prandial meal should be resumed, (the Johnsonian compound did *not* fall from her rosy lips,) and there was an unanimous exclamation of assent. Our friend the Artist was so kind as to offer to break the ice, and we listened with attentive expectation to an adventure which he thus related :

III.

THE SECOND SIGHT.

A FEW years ago, in the Scottish Highlands, the chapter of accidents threw me into chance companionship with a gentleman, in whose society a wet evening passed on pleasantly and rapidly, in conversation upon a variety of subjects, which turned, at length, to The Second Sight, which even yet is claimed for a few ancient families—those of indisputable Celtic descent. It was not until he saw that I possessed some hereditary respect for the superstition in question, and was not much of a sceptic as to the grounds for crediting it, that I could get my companion to discuss it

with the freedom which had previously characterized our discourse upon other topics.

"In my own family," said he, "the Second Sight has been exercised from time immemorial. In other Scottish families, or rather, in the few which also possess this prophetic vision, the gift has descended from father to son; in ours, from a circumstance which it would be tedious to relate, it has been delivered by the succession from grandfather to grandson, there always being the lapse of one, in its exercise by the respective parties. Thus, supposing that your grandfather possessed this gift, it would not descend to your father, but the line of succession would be continued to you. I could tell you an anecdote or two, to show how this has been the case in my own family.

"My grandfather, who resided near Culloden Moor, had taken a wife shortly before the second Jacobite outbreak. On the morning of the 15th of April, 1746, he sate down to breakfast with such a grave countenance, that his bride was induced to inquire what circumstance had

gloomed it. He attempted to evade the enquiry, which her womanly affection and curiosity had made, but she pressed him so closely on the point, that he confessed to having seen a shadow of coming evil—that in a word, he had beheld, by anticipation, a bloody fight, close to their habitation, in which the defeat of the kilted Highlanders, by the red-coat soldiers of the Hanoverian Dynasty, clearly intimated the downfall of the Chevalier's cause. My father was himself a well-wisher to the Stuarts, and the head of our clan had forfeited his Earldom and estates, and had narrowly escaped with life, on account of his active participation in the Rebellion of 1715. 'But,' said my father, 'I saw also, my Isabella, that we shall receive a gallant and Royal leader under our roof this evening. It can be no other than The Prince, and it behoves you to make the best preparation for him.' In Scotland, at that time, the wife's motto was to hear and to obey, and she who was thus spoken to, hastened to put her house in order, and make it ready for the reception of the

visioned guest. A few minutes before midnight, the tramp of cavalry was heard approaching. It came near—nearer. The horses drew up at my grandfather's gate. A loud knocking brought out the inmates, and they received as a claimant on their hospitality one who certainly was a Royal leader, but not exactly him whom they expected. Instead of bonny Prince Charlie, it was the Duke of Cumberland, then a strong, active man, who was five-and-twenty, on that very day."

"*His* advent," said I, "must have been something of a disappointment ?"

"It was. The Duke had ridden forward from Nairn, in pursuit, and he sate up during the greater part of the night, merely snatching an hour's sleep on the bed, without taking off his clothes. He quitted the house at daybreak and the most noticeable thing remembered of him was, that he eat most voraciously, and took enormous quantities of snuff, or *sneeshen*, as it was then called. He demanded the loan of a snuff-box, as he went away. The worst in the house, namely a common Scotch-mull,

was filled and handed to him—for, sooth to say, independent of my grandfather's sympathies being with the Stuarts, he never expected to see his box again. Two or three days after the battle, however, a soldier rode up to the house, asked for its occupant by name, and restored him the box, with the Duke's compliments and thanks! When opened, it was found to be filled with gold. In this manner, the Duke had chosen to make his acknowledgments for the night's lodging which had been unwillingly afforded him. The box, thus honoured by having been used by the Duke of Cumberland, during the eventful day of Culloden, has been preserved in our family, as a sort of heir-loom, and you may see it now, if you have the slightest curiosity."

In compliance with my desire, the box was produced. It was a very plain Scotch-mull, without the slightest ornament, except a small silver-tip on the cover, by which to open it, and a slight silver rim of the same material, round the top. On the cover had been rudely scratched something like a shield, containing

what I was herald enough to designate as a *stag's head, cabossed.*"

"I keep this box," said its owner, "precisely as it was delivered to me—the only portion of my father's property that ever came into my possession after his death. Not having the smaller vices of smoking or snuffing—indeed, having as much antipathy for 'the weed,' as ever King James had—I yet keep it, as a memorial of its last, rather than its original possessor."

"Yet," said I, "if it does not 'point a moral,' you are now making it 'adorn a tale.'"

"We have another memorial of the fatal contest at Culloden," said he, "to which the Jacobite feelings of my family have attached a value more relative than real. For my own part, I have always thought it fortunate, that this country had a happy riddance of the Stuarts—a race, at once weak and wilful, headstrong and tyrannic. The nation acted well in calling to the throne a prince of its own choice—thus establishing the principle of an elective monarchy. The battle of Culloden, as you know, was the death-blow to the

Chevalier's hopes. There is little doubt, now, that the unfortunate Prince behaved, in that battle, with spirit and bravery. His earnest desire was to rally the Highlanders, broken by the first deadly discharge of the English artillery,—to lead them on,—and to risk all on that hazard. But Sir Thomas Sullivan seized his bridle, turned his horse round, and conducted him off the field. You know how many, and what romantic adventures he passed through, before, with a sum of £30,000 on his head, he finally effected his escape to Brittany. On one of these occasions, it was my grandfather's good fortune to render him a signal service, at the risk of his own life, and, when they parted company, the Chevalier put his miniature into his hands, saying, 'if ever Fortune should smile upon me, let me see this, and you shall find me not ungrateful!' This is the miniature, which we have carefully retained in our family, in memory of the Prince."

He handed me an oval miniature, plainly set in gilded brass—such as, in later days, was called *pinchbeck*, from the jeweller who intro-

duced it. The resemblance was not to be mistaken. The light hair, blue eyes, and elongated features of the Chevalier have often been described, and are well known. There was the blue ribband of the Garter, the star of that Order on the breast, the lace cravat, the coat of greyish blue tartan striped with red, and the crimson mantle with ermine bordering. Such was the likeness, such the habiliments and adornments of the unfortunate Chevalier. I would prefer that portrait, in its humble setting, to the resemblance of any living Royalty. What a moral did it suggest!

I inquired of my friend, whether, having made such a successful first appearance as a Seer, his grandfather had experienced any more visions?

"Certainly. Having made a commencement so promising, he continued to exercise the faculty. The last occasion, which was more than half a century after—for he lived to extreme old age—was one which such of his descendants as heard of it were not likely to forget. My father, being of 'a

truant disposition,' like Horatio in the play, took French leave of his birth-place when he had scarcely reached his eighteenth year. The fifteen years following witnessed his wanderings through all quarters of the globe, and during all that time he most undutifully neglected to hold any communication with his family by letter. It was generally believed by his kinsmen that he was dead; but his father constantly declared that he *felt* to the contrary, and his mother fondly clung to the same belief with the trust which a mother's feelings alone can retain,—for hers was that hoping against hope, which believes, rather what it wishes, than what circumstances might make it fear as only too probable. At last, when his very memory was almost forgotten, except by his parents, the long absent reappeared in the scenes of his youth. The manner in which he was received, as I have heard him relate it, was inexpressibly striking. The father, white with the snow, and bowed by the ailments of more than eighty years, had maintained most of his mental faculties unim-

paired, and was cherished, amid his children and his children's children, as a venerable patriarch, a living link between the past and the present. On the thirty-third anniversary of the birth-day of the absent son—which they had continued to celebrate rather from custom than from a belief in his existence—the old man suddenly exclaimed, fixing his eyes intently on the open window, 'I see the return of the absent: to-night, even to-night, his voice will sound in the house wherein he first drew breath.' Not a word more did he say, but his wife, who had the fullest confidence in his Second Sight, ordered that preparations should instantly be made for the reception of a guest. The day had far declined, and no visitor appeared. The younger members of the family smiled, in scepticism, at the non-fulfilment of their grandfather's prediction. At last, when it was now almost midnight, a step was heard outside. The window had been left open, and through it, though rather an unusual mode of entrance, bounded in the robust man, bronzed with foreign travel, who

had left the place when a lad. No one recognised him, except his aged parents. He bent on his knee, before his father, for a blessing; and the old man, laying his hands upon the head of the long absent, fervently blessed him, and then exclaimed, in thankfulness, 'Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace!' Some time was spent in questions and replies, and, rather early in the morning, the happy family retired to rest. When they had arisen, and assembled round the breakfast table, it was noticed that my grandfather's seat was vacant. One of his daughters went to summon him. Why need I prolong my story? She found him dead. By his side was his wife, sleeping in happy unconsciousness of her loss. If ever a heart had broken with joy, it was that old man's. Was I wrong in saying that there was something striking in the wanderer's return to his native hills?"

My companion did not much hesitate, at my urgent request, to state the instances in which, in his own person, the faculty of Second

Sight had been manifested. They were related, as matters of fact, with such an apparent faith in their reality—and it should be remembered that the narrator was now drawing upon his own experience, in which there was scarcely any chance of a mistake—that Doubt itself would be almost silenced if, even as I did, it had heard the story told so much more impressively than I can pretend to repeat it.

"According to what is understood to be the usual custom in our family," said he, "the faculty of Second Sight descends from grandsire to grandson, passing over the entire intermediate descendants. None of my grandfather's sons, therefore, could expect to be endowed with it; and, of his many grandsons, there appeared little chance that I—born, too, out of Scotland, and from a Saxon mother—should inherit it. Least of all did such an idea cross my own mind for a moment.—I was in my fourteenth year, and had proceeded to spend my school-vacation with relations in the country. My father, when I left home, was in the enjoyment of that rude health

which had always distinguished him, and made him then, though in his sixtieth year, a much stronger man than many who were his juniors by ten or fifteen years. I was in the country, when, one morning, it chanced that I sat alone —if I can say that I was alone, with one of Scott's novels in my hand—when, happening to raise my eyes towards the fire-place, over which was placed a large mirror, I saw my father standing by it, with his arm resting on the chimney-piece. My first impulse was to jump from my chair, throw aside my book, and hastily advance to him. He did not stir, and his eyes, as they looked at another object, appeared dull and glassy. I had scarcely taken a second step forward, when I noticed that I could see into the mirror, *through* my father, and that he cast no image or reflection on the glass. The thought that there was something strange in this rushed into my mind. My advancing steps were suddenly arrested by this thought, and a horror struck through my frame. I remember nothing more, except that, late in the day, I found myself in

bed, and was told by one of my cousins that I had been found senseless on the floor, and that I had been bled by the medical gentleman who had been called in to see me. I could not resist the impulse, even at the risk of being laughed at, of whispering to my cousin the cause of my sudden illness. As might be expected, she laughed at it, and said she hoped I would not be so foolish as to dream of such things. But, on the third day after, a letter from home told me that my father had died, at the precise time when I saw what I believed to be his actual presence. He had been visited by a sudden ailment, which rapidly terminated in his death. *Why* this should have occurred—for it *did* occur, as certainly as I am now telling it to you—I am unable to explain. I only relate a simple fact, which neither time, change, nor circumstances can obliterate from my memory."

After a silence of some duration,—for there was subject for meditation in what I had heard, —I ventured to ask on what other occasions he had experienced the faculty?

"The second, and only other instance, occurred," said he, "not very long ago, when I was in my twenty-third year. I cannot account for the impulse which prompts me to converse, thus freely, with a stranger, on a subject of this kind, but I feel that, even if you do not believe, you will not ridicule what I tell you, and the overloaded mind is sometimes glad to have an auditor respecting the superstition,—if such it be,—to whom, even if he do not share its peculiar shades of speculation, it may unburthen itself without reserve.

"When I had reached my seventeenth year,—that age when the Girl has softly glided into the Woman, and the Youth can scarcely be said to do more than stand on the threshold of Manhood, though he yearns, most sinlessly, for the soft companionship which soothes, and softens, and refines his nature,—it was my fortune to be thrown a good deal into the society of a very charming girl of my own age, a distant relative. I need not fatigue you with a description of the young

lady. Beautiful she certainly was,—at least, so *I* thought, and think,—but the peculiar character of that loveliness I feel that words could never correctly make known to you. But, indeed, the mere attractions of form and feature would not by themselves have charmed me at any time. I found that she had a clear, thoughtful, well-informed intellect, and I have ever believed it is the mind that makes the body beautiful. In the strange old country house which was her dwelling-place, and with no other being of either sex, of an age at all near my own, it is scarcely wonderful,—to say nothing of the young lady's own attractions,—that I very speedily became enamoured of her. Nor was it a trifling consolation to know that the fancy, or the passion (for it was as much of sentiment as sense,) was as reciprocal as heart could desire. Well do I remember, even as it were yesterday, when I first dared say in words, what my eyes had told long before, how dearly I loved her. And her reply,—it was given; not in uttered language, but in the low and relieving

sigh which speaks, even in its silence. The blush upon her cheeks,—the heaving of her bosom,—the sudden tears springing into her dark blue eyes (like the dew trembling on the violets,) gave me the glad assurance that I did not sue in vain. Even yet, though years have passed away, the memory of that first hour of mutually-confessed affection is graven in my heart. Well, it is some consolation, that when Hope leaves us, Memory remains to solace us, however sadly.

"It would be a bad reward for the patience with which, my dear Sir, you have listened to all this egotism, to try it further by inflicting upon you an account of all the tenderness of protestation and promise which followed the mutual confession I spoke of. The truth is, we were thrown much together, when we had nothing to do but fall in love with each other, at the most susceptible period of the three-score and ten years allotted to human life, and we certainly fulfilled our destiny. Vows of eternal constancy we exchanged, of course, and wisely agreed that, at a fit and future

period, we should be espoused. And so—we parted. *My* lot was speedily cast in the midst of the business and bustle of the world, in which I had to win subsistence and reputation; and *hers* was destined to glide on in quiet, first in the home which is so haunted with recollections of the past, that it would be a positive pain for me now to revisit it, and finally in a sequestered village in the most beautiful part of the South of France. Our correspondence gradually became less frequent than it had been at first; and I must admit, on my own part, that at last, when I had formed new ties, it wholly ceased.

"I remember how,—for our conversation was often on subjects beyond our years,—we had often spoken together of that world beyond the grave, of which so little is known, so much vainly guessed. 'I believe,' said she, who was fond of such speculations, 'that disembodied spirits may hover around those whom they loved on earth, and,' she added, with more solemnity than I fancied the occasion warranted, 'if it should be so, be assured

that I shall first use my privilege to watch over you, and,—if it be permitted,—even to be visitant visible to you.' I smiled at the promise thus made, half in sport. I knew not then, how Truth may lurk amid the smiles of mirth.

"Many years passed on. The sanguine youth had gradually changed into the man of the world, struggling for fortune, and striving, in that struggle, to gain that Fame which, when gained, is unsubstantial as the gorgeous domes, and towers, and mountains, and islands, to which Fancy finds resemblance in the sky on the eve of a bright autumnal day. I had taken unto myself a wife. I had 'olive branches round about my table.' I had taken an active and leading part in the strife of politics, and the business of life. I had gradually become one of the last persons whom any one would think likely to be moved, even for a moment, by a superstitious fancy. I was known as a plain, matter-of-fact gentleman, troubled with few day-dreams, and holding a decided belief in the Actual.

"One night, when absent from home on a visit to a friend, I retired to bed early, as was the custom in his well-regulated house, and lay in that pleasant, quiet state, which may be taken as the medium between thought and repose. Contemplation, which had been busy, was momentarily fading, but Sleep had not yet put in his seal upon the phantasies. As the clock commenced striking the midnight hour, I heard, or thought I heard, the door of my chamber slowly opened, and footsteps—they seemed a woman's, by their light tread—pace stealthily along. They came near—yet nearer. They reached the side of my bed, and paused. Then a dim light appeared through the curtains, as if some one were cautiously holding a lamp, half veiling its light, so as to allow a glance at my features without dazzling me. The curtains slowly opened, and—and, by heaven! for it was *not* a dream, I saw a woman's face, pale, melancholy, yet indistinct, gazing upon mine with intent and mournful aspect. Of the lineaments of that face, which yet appeared not wholly unknown to me,—

haunting me like the memory of something long since seen,—I could gather little precisely in the brief and fleeting glance I had of them; for, as I have said, they were indistinct. But the eyes,—so lustrous, and yet so mournful in their brightness and expression,—these I could distinctly see: these awakened Memory within me, though I knew not what, or whence, or how, was my knowledge of them.

"I started from my stillness. I spoke, to satisfy myself that I was not in sleep. I looked around, to see whether the light which had glanced upon me, might not be that of the moon peering in through the casement; but it was a dark, starless night. I turned to the vision—if such it were; but as I was about addressing it, I saw it slowly vanish. I arose and followed it—in vain! As it retired, the light by which it was mantled grew less and less; but the unearthly lustre of those sorrowful eyes remained the latest in my view. Just as all had faded away, the clock pealed out its last stroke of midnight, and that clear sound fell on my ear like the knell for a de-

parted soul. A shriek, too, more piercingly shrill, and wildly horrible than any sound I had ever heard before, accompanied the exit of the shadowy visitant. All, from first to last, which I had seen and have described, had happened between the first and the last stroke of the midnight hour. An age of agony was concentrated into the compass of those few moments.

"When the morning came, breaking the troubled slumbers of the night, I found my door fastened within, precisely as I had secured it when I retired to rest. The circumstance appeared so startling, when I calmly considered it, that I made a memorandum that day, while each particular was vividly fresh in my mind, of what I had seen or imagined. Why should I longer delay the result? Within ten days, I received a letter, informing me that *she*, who had long been separated from my very thoughts, had died in the foreign land where she had passed so many years. The startling coincidence was, that the breath of life had departed from her on the very day, and at the very

hour, when those dark, unfathomable eyes met mine, as I have told you. She died suddenly, and by no lingering illness.—I have no more to tell."

To wonder at this strange relation, and to repeat, with Hamlet, that there were more things in earth and heaven, than our philosophy had dreamed of, was only natural. I ventured to inquire, what the narrator really thought of the visit from the world of spirits; for it was clear that such he had conceived it to be; and the answer was, "I doubt not that it was *her* departing spirit, which, as it hovered between dust and immortality, thus gave its latest token of remembrance to him whom it had loved in life, and until death,—testifying, by that last farewell, the truth of that affection which the grave alone could terminate."

Various were the comments made upon this relation, some of us, more or less confessing a sort of belief in the supernatural; some

entirely disavowing all credence in such things.

Tressilian said, that disbelief appeared as difficult as belief, so many well-authenticated instances were upon record. He thought that the majority of them might be traced to a disordered state of the mind or body. "As dreams," continued he, "are little more than representations of our waking thoughts, seen in sleep through the kaleidoscope of Fancy; so what are often taken for supernatural appearances, may be no more than the reflection of our hopes or fears, magnified by Imagination into something like the vivid truth of reality."

"Some time ago," said Butler, "when I was in Germany, I met with the hero of a romance, which was curiously coincident in the leading particulars with one of the incidents in the Scottish story which we have just heard. The man to whom I allude was quiet, gentlemanly, and apparently sane, until, by accident, some one, in a large company, happened to speak slightingly of all ghost-stories; when, to our surprise, this person started up, and violently

contended that *he* must believe in supernatural occurrences, as he had bitter and personal reasons for knowing their truth. He was removed by an attendant, whom we discovered to be his keeper; and I afterwards saw him frequently in a *maison de santé*, at Vienna. Under proper care and gentle discipline, he was very calm and conversable. He had been a student for many years, at Bonn; and when I went to bid him 'Good bye,' he put into my hand a manuscript, which I have taken the trouble to translate, and will now read, if you will allow me.

"I ascertained that he was a man of high birth, large fortune, and superior education. An early disappointment of the heart had induced a deep and settled melancholy, which, acting upon a vivid imagination, and excitcable temperament, had eventually thrown his mind off its balance. From the manner in which he spoke, I have no doubt that he firmly believed in all the circumstances which he has related in what I shall read to you. As to his authorship, I need only say, that two or

three works which he published while at Heidelberg, fell into my hands; and, though they were clever and fanciful, by no means equalled his conversation. These works had attracted little attention from the public."

Lady Tressilian inquired what was the age of this German student? Mr. Butler answered, that, when he saw him, he appeared about thirty, and that his illness had commenced, as he understood, some twelve years before. He had not latterly heard of him, but believed that he was occasionally free from confinement, as, curiously enough, his mind was never affected except during the seasons of spring and winter.

In a few minutes, Butler returned from his room with the manuscript, which, he said, was a translation, as nearly literal as he could make it, of—

IV.

THE GERMAN STUDENT'S STORY.

Do I dream, or am I again holding converse with the world of men, from whose haunts I have been so long estranged—with whose impulses, for years, I have had nought in common? I have long been shut out from communion with my kind, and now, like the plant reared in darkness, which languishes for light to give it health and vitality, and turns to the slenderest gleam—my spirit pines for the companionship of man, and now would fain win the benison of his sympathy.

I tread, once more, amid the haunts of men. Once more, I bathe my brow in the free gush-

ing of the blessed air of heaven. Once more, I look upon the earth, dædal though it be, and worship the might, the majesty, the magnificence of Nature. For this I aspired through the weary days, and more weary nights, which passed heavily over me—as though they would never pass—in my dreary dungeon thrall. For this I languished—with a faded cheek and fevered brow, with withered heart and baffled hopes,—until it was scarcely a marvel if I deemed that my very nature was changed. Aye, thus rose my fervent aspirations, through the darkness of what I feared would be an endless, and felt to be an oppressive prisonment,—for there dawned no ray of promise within me, or around me, to lighten the gloom which clouded my mind in my noon of life.

I had nerved my spirit to endure perpetual enthralment. I had striven to forget the living glory and the breathing beauty of the world from which I was shut out—and *now*, whatever I panted for comes, all unsought, to my enjoyment. Wealth—great among the magnates of the land—vigorous manhood, to plunge, if I

would, into power, pleasure, and possession :— all that can administer to luxury, that can feed ambition, that can throw a loveliness of aspect over even the laidly features of vice, or strew spring-odours upon the path of virtue ; an enfranchised and instructed mind, to tower among and above my fellow-men ;—knowledge, whether won in early years from books, those undeceiving friends, or gleaned from the action and passion of experience, or gained through long years of captivity and endurance, when memory alone was left to a disturbed and distracted mind to link me with the past, and console me for the present, and supply me with hope for the future. These, varied in their aspects, multiform in their powers, unconquerable in their union—these now are mine. Yet now, when *they* have come, I sadly feel that they are not what I sought. They cannot fling freshness into this withered heart—they cannot erase the memories inscribed by sorrow on the red-leaved tablets of my heart—they cannot bring back the face and form of beauty which won my love in happier hours—they

can bring me neither happiness nor forgetfulness; and I smile, in bitterness, as I think how idly my spirit could once imagine that such as these would be all-sufficient to secure me happiness.

Through unnoted time—through wearying monotony of prisoned hours, I have had no heart to throb with the passion-tide of love to my wildly-beating heart, which hath panted for that sweet companionship. The low, soft voices which I loved to listen to in the solemn silence of the stilly night—the aërial forms of beauty which floated around my couch, while my mind was far away in Dreamland—all are vanished, and, long ago, my loftiest auguries of imagination have fallen to the dust, like the priceless vase which drops from the hands of a careless child, shattered beyond all power of restoration.

If I can no more hold converse with Her—the fairest and the best, whose name, amid the dreary waste of mournful years, I have uttered but to the voiceful zephyr which glided by me, fraught, I have fondly fancied, with some remembered tone of hers,—nor with those, the faithful and the fond, the friends who were

mine on earth, as they yet may be in the starry glory-beds of heaven,—nor with those, the deceiving and the heartless, who flitted around me in the prosperous hour, and fled when the wintry blast was heard; if with none of these can I hold converse, yet I may calm the disquietings of a stricken spirit, by tracing on these pages the records of wounded feelings and wasted hopes.

The mother who bore me could not recognise her son in the changed being who sits here to pour out one memory of his heart:—my very lineaments are changed:—premature troubles have ploughed furrows on my brow, and my heart—but let *that* pass, for I must back to my humanity, for I mingle once more with men.

I am the youngest of many children, and—for surely I may say it now, when for me Fame has lost its spur—was first among them in the gifts of understanding. The glorious writers of the antique times, who poured forth melody, wisdom, and joy (for it is wise to be happy) in a full gush from the exhaustless fountains of their own hearts—these were familiar to me, almost

from the time when Reason first bathed my inquiring soul in the rich dews of its eternal power. With little effort did my mind acquire, and my memory retain the treasures of knowledge and imagination which these chroniclers of other times and olden inspirations, so lavishly have scattered over their venerable and venerated pages. Pleasant was it for *my* soul to bask in the glorious sunshine of *theirs*. Delightful was it for my younger and tenderer thoughts to borrow strength and vigour from the calm and matured serenity of theirs.

Nor were the mind-magicians of later times unknown to me, or unprized in their worth. As my knowledge of them increased, so increased my thirst for knowledge. Thus those through whom the Past yet lived, and those from whom the Present might hope for memorials as permanent and bright, were the chosen companions even of my hours of holiday, nor knew I any playmates so untiring, and ever friendly, as these, my books.

Boyhood passed away, and I shot up into the stature of Manhood. A proud heart was

mine, which brooked not the efforts of the haughty to look me down. To such—a stern glance—a cold, contemptuous eye was my sole and sufficient answer.

Yet, though I sought not the fellowship of man, it pursued me—like a shadow in the sunny day, or a thought in the starry night—even into the recesses of retirement. And, though I strove to shun it, still it followed me, until I was subdued by the admiration, which, despite my coldness, still sued for my regard. So I sometimes mingled in the crowds, a welcomed guest, and all said, that even to Mirth herself I had lent riches and smiles, which brightened where they fell, and that I had bound the temples of that joy-voiced nymph with flowery wreaths, which I had snatched from the generous lap of bright-eyed Pleasure.

Thus I shone as a star among them, the distinguished of the circle. Many a tongue grew eloquent in praise of the young and half-haughty student, whose smile, even as a guerdon, was treasured up by sensitive hearts, through hours of thoughtful solitude. Many a cheek alternated, at my approach, from pale to

damask. Many a dark eye, passion-lighted, flashed forth its heretofore latent fires, with eloquent expression, as it met my gaze. Many a maiden trembled with sudden, and not undelighted emotion, as the touch of my fingers came thrillingly upon her delicate hand, in the wildering movements and mazes of the passion-nursing dance. Many a heart longed for my appearance, and then—through an infinite excess of deep feeling—shrunk back when it felt the consciousness of my presence. And when I presented a rose, aye, or even the humblest meadow flower to any of that galaxy of loveliness, how often was it secretly worn and fondly cherished next her throbbing heart —even after its beauty had departed, and its odour fled—as a memorial, slight but tender, of him whose touch had sanctified even its worthlessness, and whose gentle thoughts might have gone, if but for a fleeting moment, with the trivial gift.

It may well be conceived that a nature like mine could not be insensible to the feelings I thus excited ; but, flatteringly as this consciousness came upon my soul, I then but slightly

heeded the incense it wafted there. I felt something within me whispering that I was born for more than the admiration of the few. The aspirings of ambition fed my spirit with auguries of hope; and though I grieved to part from the kind hearts which had made themselves the intimates of my heart, yet I nerved myself to part with them; and, with a compelling desire to win fame, I left the scenes of my youth, of my triumph; and there went with and after me, prayers for success from the aged, and fond anticipations of my renown from the young.

So I went into the busy world of men, yet did not leave the world of my own hoarded contemplations. I mingled with the many. I visited various scenes, and observed all things. I grew familiar with that riddle—the human heart. I learned the arcana of philosophy and art. I read the ever-open page of Nature, for my study had hitherto chiefly been among books—and then I surrounded myself, in the silent night, with the records of heroic History, and trod the starry paths of immortal

Poetry—until, at length, I knew by the struggles of my heart, that for *me*, also, the hour had come, and then I called up, as with a magician's power, the spells of imagination, and the talismans of knowledge, until, blending them together, I poured out, on the mute page, in the melody of poetry, the gush of burning thoughts, which, from my youth upwards, had been mustering in my mind, vague, erratic, and aimless. And, as I wrote, the full tide of passion, pathos, and power rushed from my pen.

I sent my pages into the world of men, and a few felt, and the many *said* they felt, the witchery of my strain. I became a marvel and a wonder. Poets, as they saw what riches I was scattering with a lavish hand, confessed that I had won at one bound, what they had spent weary lives in quest of. Philosophers mused, in rapt wonder, over the pages whereon the stern intensity of truth was mingled with the airy fictions of fancy. The Scholar—as, with throbbing brow, and silently sickening heart, he studied by his midnight lamp, or

upon some sunny bank, beside a gurgling stream in his own native land, whither he had come to die—forsook the lore of antiquity, to ponder, with an elevated spirit, on that which I had produced, and still glowed with admiration, while, with impatient delight, he hnrried over my page. Beauty—as she sat in the leafy solitude of her rose-wreathed bower, waiting (how anxiously!) for the *one* who was all the world to her—felt a fever-flush mantle her cheek, and strange spirit-strivings throng through her heart, as she sighed or joyed over my strains. The widowed Matron—as, with half-understood emotion, her children read my writings to her—wept, not in sorrow, over the awakened remembrances of her youthful love, which, from the cells wherein they long had slept, my burning verse evoked. The stern Patriot, who had almost thrown aside the hope of rendering the land of his birth also the land of his pride, felt, from my strains, that despair was a crime. The Painter was not ashamed to own that from my revealings he took his most beautiful picturings of

heroism, love, and sorrow. The Melodist, whom they besought to wed my verse to music, flung his lyre away, exclaiming that music was a useless appendage to my songs, which had in themselves more tuneful symphonies than his art could frame. The Lover, whom deep passion had rendered incapable of using the strength of his own oratory, used the persuasiveness of my songs to win from blushing beauty all that she had denied before. Envy was silent for once, for, if she did not echo the praise which fell from the multitudinous lips of Admiration, at least, she did not deny that it was deserved. Thus, all places were full of, all persons familiar with, my songs. Many a wounded heart blessed him, whose verse had beguiled it into a momentary forgetfulness of sorrow. The aged and the young, the enthusiast and the cold, the proud and the lowly, united in lauding him, who, they said, had laid open the heart of man in its affections, passions, griefs, and joys ; who had shown what undreamed of treasures lay in its secret places ; who, they declared, had drawn

spells from truth, fancy, and wisdom, and, binding them in the silken toils of melodious verse, had won favours from the genii of the mind, which many, through the long eternity of by-gone time, had eagerly sought; which few have found. Thus did I reap the richest honor that a poet can desire; the boon of Fame.

Soon I found that fame, to be perfect, must be shared. Even amid the concourse and festivals of the magnates of the land, I sighed for some congenial spirit to cheer my solitude at home—to guide me to other and loftier achievements of renown—to send me to adventure on some hitherto unpathed ocean of thought; and this longing, alike nursed in crowds and loneliness, did not long remain unsatisfied.

One day I had wandered from the din of the crowded city, to win from the balmy quietude and gentle breath of the country, some cooling for the fever of my cheek and brow; for the continued exercise of thought, and the birth of poetry are painful and exacting. I rested on a shady bank, wearied by my lengthened walk,

for the city had unnerved my endurance of fatigue, and my step was less springy in the noontide than it had wont to be in the morning of my youth. A clear rivulet ran, rippling, at my feet—its sound was music to my ear. Around me was the magnificence of nature. In the clear sky, far above, the chorists of the grove warbled their thrilling songs. The evening shades came on. The sun sank, like a conqueror, far away beyond the western horizon, and, gradually, the minstrel-birds ceased their song. Musing on the fame which I had won, I was thinking how to exceed what I had already done, by throwing the concentrated power of my increased and still-increasing knowledge, and the whole sensibilities of my heart, into expression and language. But the chain of my reveries, and the sleep-like silence of that lovely evening, were a little broken by the silvery sweetness of a woman's voice. I started at the sound; for there is that in the melody of such accents, which falls on the heart refreshingly as the shower on the sultry summer, or as a fall of water upon the ear of a solitary, or

as the distant, dying echo of sweet-souled music heard afar off, amid the rocks and trees.

My heart beat with joy as I heard that sweet voice warble one of *my* songs—lending a rich and powerful expression to the passion of the verse. She who sang came towards where, unseen, I lay. Then, though she saw me not, the glory of that unrivalled beauty met my gaze. I heard her words as, with maiden and mutual confidence, she and her sister conversed. My name was on her lips, linked with the expressed desire to see and know him whose songs had filled her heart with emotion. They passed on. From that hour, a new feeling filled my soul. I had beheld the all of loveliness it had ever fancied as what female beauty ought to be. In her I recognised the perfect admixture of every element of form, feature, or divine thought—for the mind may be read in the features—which I had sighed to find in woman, but I had vainly sighed for, until then. It was that visible and mental beauty which I had described in song.

I soon became known to her, through a ser-

vice happily rendered, which preserved her life, and, for a time, endangered mine. I discovered that our sires had been friends in youth, and thus, orphan as she was, she had an hereditary claim to my regard. But, ere she knew me *as* myself, she had learned to love me *for* myself. We read, and conversed, and walked together. Sweet was our interchange of thought. At last, when I told her that *I* was the poet whose passionate earnestness she loved so well, she cast her noble spirit, with a trusting tenderness, as an offering upon the altar of my heart.

She loved me, with that fervent sensibility which Woman alone is capable of feeling, and which accompanies only her first love. She eagerly enjoyed the applauses which were showered upon me—for Love had now re-awakened all the Poet in my heart. They told her how safely she had ventured the treasure of affection within a barque, where Hope was at the helm, bound for the haven of hearted happiness.

Yet she sometimes doubted—for, though Love be strong as death, it can be helpless as infancy. She doubted—not the worthiness of

the beloved, but the certainty of reciprocity. Soon was this doubt dissolved. One summer's eve, I sat by her side, in the haunt where I first had seen her, and I poured out, with the full utterance of love, the passion which disturbed my soul. Her reply was given—not with spoken words, but in her low and happy sigh. In her tear-gemmed eyes, her blushing cheek, her throbbing bosom, I saw the assurance that I did not sue in vain.

Once—and once only—did a cloud seem th float across our confidings. She was singing to me, and into the air, which of itself was mournful, she had thrown such a flood of pathos that my soul was carried away to the thoughts of other years—for Music holds the silver key of Memory. The strain ceased, and, as my wonted tribute of thanks did not at once reward it, she feared that she had failed to delight me. Tears filled her eyes, as she gently breathed this fear. At such a moment I could not utter cold words of explanation. Taking the instrument from her, and striking the chords in soft accompaniment, I threw into

rapid and voluntary song the feelings which overpowered me. The words were these :—

"Still, still, beloved! pour along
Thy wildering passion-tide of song,
For, oh! the ear which once hath heard,
Must treasure up thine every word.

And if no *instant* burst of praise
Reward the pathos of thy lays,
How sweet—how exquisite must be
That voiceless eloquence to thee.

For Flattery's honeyed words will throng
To welcome *every* breath of Song;
The tuneful and the tuneless strain
Alike *his* heartless praise can gain;

While Admiration—heart and ear—
Anxious, will hold her breath to hear,
Inhale each sweet sound, until,
Even when 'tis past, she hears thee still!"

Poor as was this tribute, she received it with joy, for it came from *me*, and she said that it had merit in her eyes, for that, unpolished by the rules of poetic art, it was the prompt and faithful expression of my thoughts. Thus brief was the only shadow which dimmed, but for a moment, the sunshine of our love.

Why do I dwell on the memories of these fleeting, happy hours? Even now, as they arise before me, like things of yesterday, my temples throb beneath the weight of strong emotion. I had thought my heart was tamed down to this narration. Let me hasten to conclude it.

We were betrothed. A day not distant—for my love did not brook delay—was named for our espousal, when an event took place which sadly changed the colour of my fate.

Light in heart, I had sped to my paternal home—unvisited since my triumphs—to devote to my father and my kindred the few remaining days of my celibacy. The hours passed on—slowly, as I thought; but my father and my kindred lamented the rapidity with which they flew.

The land in which I lived was in a tyrant's thrall. Men knew not friend from foe. The spy was everywhere. Oppression ruled. The iron yoke of tyranny was exalted. All who know the history of man must know that such things cannot endure. There inevitably comes

a night to dim this noon of tyranny. There comes on an hour in which this star of bitterness must be quenched. It needs but the linked union of heart to heart to unpedestal the Dagon. It may be that a word—but *one* word—will prove the unpremeditated signal for revolt.

The dungeons were crowded with the high-hearted, feared or suspected by the tyrant. But he could not chain the free exercise of thought, nor curb the race of minded indignation. There only was needed some rallying point where to commence, some leader to array the disaffected. Both came. A satellite of that haughty Court dared to violate the sacredness of a poor man's hut, and drag thence a maiden—that poor man's sole wealth, his only child. Seeing, I resisted the outrage. My arm at once rescued the maiden, and levelled the lustful minion to the dust. An universal cry arose throughout the land, when the slaves of power were sent for my arrest. The torpor of thraldom was at an end. Men arose, as from a trance, to buckle on the

brand. Me did they choose to lead them. With but one regret, I took the post of honourable danger; for though Love be happy, Liberty is holy—one, without the sun-tints of the other, would be a gloom indeed.

Beneath my banner, thronging thousands marshalled. Months passed on, in warfare with the foe. At last, strong in the justice of our cause, I met the tyrant—sword to sword. The hopes of a nation gave strength to my arm. The oppressor fell. His death was the death of his cause.

The Nation was herself once more. Equal rights, and laws, and liberties were proclaimed. Then, the deliverer was hailed as Lord. I pushed aside the thorny coronet of power, to return to the peaceful life I had quitted.

When the excitement of success was over, I sank beneath a fever of mind and body. If aught could alleviate the pain of sickness, it was the affectionate devotion of my disenthralled countrymen; and, through their kindness, and the skill of the leech whom, at a

great price, they had brought to me from afar, I gradually recovered health.

One night—I have dwelt too minutely, it may be, upon the previous narrative, but it was in avoidance of *this* part of my story, and now I *must* relate it, for though my heart swells with emotion, bleeding afresh as these memories of departed years rise up before it, yet it must nerve itself to the endurance of recording them; for there is an impulse which prompts me to tell my story, even to its bitterest conclusion.

More than once, during the early period of our acquaintance, but after each to each had communicated the heart-secret which, when thus told, changed doubt into certainty, Clara and myself had indulged in speculations as to that Future which lies before mankind, a great unpathed ocean. Vague, solemn, and mysterious were our fancies upon this subject. Religion pointed out that Eternity as a haven in which, after Life's troubles, we should repose in safety—but human doubts would arise as to the manner of this life-after-life into which

we then should pass. For my own part, I loved to imagine a state in which the Mind should have eternal and ever-varying enjoyment—in which, purified from the soil of earth, Imagination should soar into higher and clearer heavens than it had dreamed of in its pilgrimage below—in which Faith, sublimed into a serener hope, should prepare us for joys in which mere sense would have slight participation—in which there would be, but with a subtler and keener faculty of feeling, companionship with those whom we had loved and lost on earth. For we both felt that Heaven itself would be of little worth without the hope of that companionship, the link between the bodily state here, and the spiritual state beyond. And ever, as we thus thought and talked, came the trust that among the 'many mansions' in the world to come, might be found some place in which the fond and faithful in this probationary life might be admitted to abide.

"I feel," said Clara, when we had been thus earnestly and fondly indulging in such thoughts

"that, in His goodness, the loved on earth will be allowed to meet in heaven, with a memory of what has passed below, a consciousness of as much of this life as has been pure and virtuous. So strong is my conviction of this, (and, oh! is it not sweet to think that we shall meet again in eternity, when time has passed?) that, if the power be mine, when it please the Omnipotent to summon me from earth, I shall be with you in the spirit, and declare, if then I can, what state of being that eternity may be. Promise me," continued she, as she raised her lustrous eyes towards my face, "promise me that, if *you* should die first, you will speak to *me* from that far spirit-land." And then, gently pressing my lips upon that snowy brow, I promised.

The time rapidly approached in which, at length, I was to call Clara mine own—wedded to me by the rites of the church, as she had already been united by the ties of strong affection. I sate, in the calm repose of the twilight hour, in the chamber which I had occupied when a boy—in which I had mused,

and studied, and written—in which I had carried on the studies which had won me fame. In the crimson west, like a glory, the sun was going down, and the meadows, the corn-fields, and the wooded heights, were ruddy in that purpling glow. Now and then, from the adjacent grove, was heard the even-song of some winged melodist. Far off, faintly came the tinkling of the bells, as the shepherd led his flock to the fold. And, farther yet, was the music of the peal from the village church in the valley, fitfully floating up through the silence, along the broad, smooth river, and across the dewy plain. My casement was open, to admit the gentle sounds, and the breeze came softly in. It seemed as if I breathed an atmosphere of soft repose.

Suddenly, in that fading twilight, it seemed as if the chamber were filled with a rosy flush, which shewed every object clear and distinct, as if a hundred tapers had at once sent forth a simultaneous lustre. And in that flush of light there seemed a glorious Presence,—the semblance—but purer, brighter, and more

beautiful—of *her* to whom my love was vowed, on whom my thoughts had been dwelling but a moment before. I rose,—but the Presence did not move. I advanced, and put forth my hand:—it touched thin air! And then, sinking back into my chair, I knew that I gazed upon something which was not of this world. I spoke to it, and questioned whence and why it came. Then, in a voice low, but clear, came the response, which told me that my visitant was from another sphere. And while I listened, awe-struck, the same voice told me that, beyond this life, the loved of earth do meet, knowing each other there, and with eternal happiness meted unto each, according as in this life the soul had kept itself pure from the stains of earth.

Awe-smitten as I was—incapable of motion—feeling as in the sight of an immortal, I yet had the courage to ask, what was the sign that the thing was true. And then, as the Presence put forth its hand, and touched my brow, I felt a thrill throughout my frame, which, from that hour to this, has, more or

less, continued ;—a burning throb, which ever seems to press upon the brain. At once, there followed the flutter of wings, and a snow-white dove swiftly flew out of the open casement. I could trace its heavenward progress by a lengthened track of light, as it cleaved through the empyreal. When I looked once more within the chamber, all was dark. Sensation became suspended for a season, and I remained for some hours unconscious of the world around me.

When the morning came, consciousness returned, and, fearing the worst, I flung myself upon a fleet courser, and hastened to where my love resided—far, far distant. Hour after hour the noble barb flew onward. At the decline of day, the city was in view. The horse strained his utmost steed, at my urging, and sank down, as we reached *her* home, wearied with his exceeding toil. He never rose again. In after days, I often fancied there flashed reproach in his dark, full eye, ere it was glazed by death.

I hastened within the hall. All was stilled

and silent there. I passed on. Her chamber was open. There was a whisper of low, sad voices. I entered. The glare of many tapers dazzled me. I saw the funereal equipage. I *felt* that cold mortality lay there. I saw Clara, beautiful and passionless, her long hair bound with the death-fillet—flowers in her hands, and scattered on her breast—her face pale as the white sculpture of a tomb! At the very hour in which I had been visited by that Presence, in which an immortal had touched my brow,—in which the snow-white dove had soared upward, beyond my straining sight,—*she* had died! Could I doubt that, true to the compact we had made, the liberated soul's first action, when it reached the Life beyond the grave, was to bring me the assurance which I needed?

I have slight memory of what followed. They told me that since I had left my Clara, she had drooped like a flower. She had all the sweetness of the violet, and its fragility also. They said that, day after day, her form became more and more attenuated—her cheeks

wasted and hectic-flushed. She knew that she was dying, but forbade them to acquaint me with her condition, lest my love, my fears, might cause me to relinquish the station, in that glorious strife for freedom, into which my country's voice had installed me. Oh, that I could have *seen* her die—have watched and solaced the fleeting spirit of the fairest and the best: but it was destined otherwise.

No further consciousness remains. A dim memory, oppressive madness, clings to me. Then came a release, and a return to the world, with a changed aspect and a saddened soul. The very name for which I had won high triumphs remains with me no more. I had hoped that *she* would have borne it—so how could I retain it when she was no more? My kinsmen, my friends, know not whether I yet breathe the difficult air of human existence. Many high minds have not disdained to yield their sympathy to the troubled wanderer—but my heart has thanked, while it resisted their kindness. My hopes reposed on one fair flower —the storm crushed and strewed its beauty in

the dust; it can return no more, but, at least, no meaner blossom shall bloom where that beloved one grew and withered.

"It must be admitted," said Mr, Crayon, "that with much extravagance in this narrative—perhaps I might more properly call it a monologue—there is considerable power."

"Considerable power—of words," interrupted the Irishman. "My own belief is that the young gentleman was addicted to opium as well as to thick German beer and perpetual tobacco smoking; and that between the excitement supplied by the first, and the stupefaction arising from the other causes, he dreamed himself into the belief that he was a hero of romance. Certainly, what our friend Butler has been so good as to read to us will pass muster as an extravaganza, but it has little of reality from first to last."

Butler reminded him that he had prefaced

it by announcing that the Student's sanity was worse than doubtful.

Tressilian said that, if their taste ran on the supernatural, he believed he could gratify them. He recollected a story which he had heard some years before, and it had made an impression upon his mind which he feared his mode of telling would not make upon others. However, he should tell the relation as he had heard it.

V.

BLEEDING-HEART YARD.

WERE it in my power to relate the story as I heard it, years ago, from the lips of one who firmly believed the marvels which she told, the effect upon others might be as it then was upon me. But the place, the listeners, the narrator —with her earnest simplicity of diction, her overpowering sense of reality, her thrilling tones, her expressive looks, her strong credulity —should all be brought up to produce that effect.

When we were young, how an old crone's ghost-stories, by the Christmas fire, shook the nerves, and paled the cheeks, and froze the

blood, and made Curiosity, like the Giaour in "Vathek," still cry out for "More! more!" When the serious and calmer day-thought came, we could smile at the baseless terrors of the yester-e'en. The scene—the fitful light from the midnight ember of the Yule-log—the dark shadows in the back—the rustling of the leafy branches without, so clearly heard in the silence of the night—the weak and wavering voice of the aged story-teller, herself a living personation of the Past, a link between the living and the dead—these combined to clothe her legends in the garb of wonder. Had they been told by others, at a different time, or in a different place, they might have fallen coldly and calmly upon the ear, and their spell would have feebly moved us.

Thus, an anecdote which, in its relation (by one whose sufferings had almost unsettled her reason) had strangely stirred my spirit to its depths, may fail to interest those to whom I shall endeavour to present it merely as it was spoken. For there is an expressive eloquence in the eye—the quick glance—the open brow

—the thrilling tones—the darkly flowing and dishevelled hair—the earnestness of spoken narrative, with its depths and shadows, which I who merely recollect and repeat, must fail in expressing. With this brief preface, here is the legend, as I heard it.

In this huge London, there is one spot, nearly in its centre, into which many close alleys, and crowded courts, and narrow lanes, and long passages, and murky yards daily pour out a rush of population, like the arteries sending life-blood to the human heart. Not one of those places but has some sad memory associated with it, — some story of sin or sorrow, of silent suffering, or of deep crime. Many such places are there within the space which we call Holborn. A populous world is that long street, with its continuous line of busy traffic, its hum of many voices,—like the murmur of the angry waves when they dash into white froth and tawny spume upon a

rocky coast. But it was not always thus. There was a time when it was a houseless space, where the citizens of London met for sports, the very names of which have passed away, like the memories of those who practised them. Afterwards, one of the Kings who held sway in London, enclosed these city-meadows with a wall, and bestowed them as a gift upon some cunning courtier, who had found his way to the royal heart by flattery. Next, when king and courtier had passed away, the fair fields came into the possession of a brave old soldier, who had won fortune and fame, in the wars with France.

This was the Lord Hatton. He built, in the centre of this estate, a grand château, like what he had seen abroad. He had a gardener from the Low Countries, to lay out for him a beautiful place, with terraces and fountains, winding walks and green swards, fruit-trees and flowers, quaint sculptures in stone, and curious devices, fancifully cut out of the trees which grew there. There also were grottoes of spars and shells, which gleamed like precious

stones when viewed by torch-light. And, in gilded cages—as if splendour could diminish the pain of captivity—were rare birds from lands far beyond the sea. The palace and the pleasure-grounds are gone—the most searching antiquarian, would fail to find a trace of them. But the place which we now know as Hatton Garden, shews where they once were. They were the marvel of their day, and their owner was so proud of them, that it would be hard to say, which he cared more for—them, or the fair youth, his only son. Well and tenderly, piously and fondly, he had brought up this youth. In time, however, the old lord died, and the dwelling and the garden, the jewels and the gold, the honours and the title descended to his son.

There was a gorgeous funeral, and the King attended it, with all his Court. The young Lord Hatton wanted some months of being of age, but preparations soon began to be made for the rejoicings. They ransacked foreign lands for whatever was rare and costliest, to celebrate his twenty-first birth-day. They

brought arras from the tapestry-makers of Artois, and fine linen from the looms of Flanders, and rich wines from the valleys of Burgundy, and cloth-of-gold from the store-houses of Genoa, and tall mirrors from the island manufactories of Venice, and spices from the fragrant groves of Arabia, and transparent tissues from the labour of the dusky dwellers in India, and royal carpets from the merchants of Persia, and gold and silver plate, rich with chased adornments, from the goldsmiths of Paris and the carvers of Florence. For the Lord Hatton had succeeded to wealth capable of answering almost the utmost demands of extravagance, and he had resolved that his coming to man's estate should be celebrated in no niggard manner.

The gala-day arrived. The King himself was among the earliest guests, anxious to judge for himself, whether Rumour had exaggerated the fortune and luxurious tastes of his wealthy subject. The magnificence of that day was never to be forgotten by those who saw it. Far and near, it was spoken of

as eclipsing even the most royal splendour. The poets of the day made many a ballad about it which for a long time were sung in rich men's palaces, and poor men's lowly dwellings. Rich wines spouted from the fountains, from dawn of day to the set of sun. There were refreshments laid out in tents, including the substantial fare which men liked then, as well as delicate luxuries culled from many a distant clime. There were crowds of servitors inviting, pressing all to partake of the rich viands and the sparkling wines. There was sweet music from skilful players, concealed among the leafy shrubberies. There was a long portion of the green sward, pressed down and closely mown, on which the youths and maidens might dance. There was a field-at-arms for the bold knights who attended the festival. There was an extensive range in which the yeomen might exercise their sports. There was something to suit the taste and rank of all, rich and poor, old and young, gentle and simple.

The place was thrown open to all who

pleased to visit it, as well as to the distinguished specially invited by the Lord Hatton. Among the lovely visitors was one, who had more beauty than the brightest of the fair ones present. She was very lovely, indeed, and exceedingly proud in the consciousness of that surpassing beauty. She was among the crowd, not of it. Her father was an humble, honest man, earning a hard living, by hard labour. She was discontented with her lot in life. Many gallants of the Court, who had noted her remarkable beauty, had attempted to draw her from her father's humble roof; pride, rather than principle, had as yet prevented her fall. She was heart-sick with discontent. There was this aggravation, also, — she had been educated above her station. Adjacent to her father's cottage, close to what we now call St. Martin's Lane, there was a convent, where she had been taught to read and write—unusual attainments, at that time, for one of her age and sex,—and increase of knowledge had been as fuel to feed the flame of discontent, which was swelling in her heart. She was thus

exactly ripe for temptation. Be sure that the Evil One ever watches the hour and seizes the occasion to do his will.

It would be difficult to determine what impulse had brought Edith Lee, for that was her name, to the great festival given on Lord Hatton's birthday. It is true that most of her neighbours went, but their's was no example for one who ever had scorned to follow in the common track, and had hitherto avoided exhibitions of grandeur;—for when they were over, it made her very sad to think, as she sat in the poor cottage of her father, that others should be splendidly attired and luxuriously surrounded, while she was subject to the lowest wants, yet feeling that her capacity for enjoyment was as high as theirs. Surely she had not gone among the crowd at Lord Hatton's to display her beauty, (she was too proud to be vain,) for she had half-hidden her face beneath the large wimple which she wore, according to the custom of her humble condition in those days, and had concealed her figure in her ordinary plain attire. A mixture

of curiosity and impatience had brought her thither. If she had endeavoured to define the impulse she might have failed. There are times and circumstances which lead us to act, we know not why, as if some invisible hand pushed us forward,—as if some viewless finger of resistless fate beckoned us on, and impelled us to obedience.

As Edith Lee stood, pale and still as a Sibyl, in that scene of gaiety and mirth, perhaps her bosom was the only one in the crowd which covered a heavy heart. Naturally of a temperament more lively than grave, her musings had turned of late into that thoughtful meditation from which tears would be a great relief, but to calm which, tears do rarely flow. Her beauty gained more in expression than it lost in force by this change. The light of her glance was not dimmed but softened, and her voice now had a subdued sweetness, like that born of the gentle kiss of the southern breeze upon the voiceful chords of the Æolian harp. She now bore a deeper beauty than that of common life,—a beauty

over which Thought had gently passed, and softly left a trace of its shadowy presence. So, in the world's elder days, might have appeared a daughter of earth after her first entrancing interview with one of the Sons of God, earthward descended, enamoured of her beauty; and so might she have stood in listening mood, after having gazed at the purpled pinions of the heavenly visitant on his returning flight, thinking that, after the visible Presence had passed away, she yet heard the rustling sounds of those ether-cleaving wings, and wondering whether she should ever again bask in the light of the radiant countenance which beamed with glory from the far and golden empyreal!

Thus Edith Lee stood, almost concealed in the shadow and by the huge trunk of an ancient tree,—her mind far away in the land of dreams, as she gazed upon the changing brilliancies of the sky, fancying each cloud an island in which it would be happiness to live and love. Who among us has not watched the sky, when its blue beauty is diversified

with glorious piles of many-coloured cloud, in which Fancy can trace islets, domes, minarets, and mountains, blended yet contrasted? Who has not sometimes yielded to the softening influences of the subduing even-tide, and, gazing on this glorious Cloudland, wished that he had wings to fly away and be at rest among one of its many mansions? So stood and gazed Edith Lee, and so she thought, until there came the sweet voice of music, and the sound of approaching footsteps, and the happy harmony of light laughter, and the joyful murmur of mirthful language. There was *one* voice, among the many that were audible, which thrilled through her very heart. It was musical, clear, and low as the pleasant sound of a well-played instrument. As the crowd of gallants came in view, she recognized *one* face, *one* form, the moment she saw it,—a recognition which, though none but herself was or could be aware of it, caused a heart-quake which covered her brow, cheeks, neck, and bosom with a sudden flush. Voice, form, and face were such as, night after night, had

haunted her in dreams, ever since her proud spirit had rebelled against her lowly condition in life. Have I not said that the Tempter had marked that discontent?

Never before, never before had she thus seen *him*,—breathing, living, speaking in her presence. But he had been vividly with her in the dream by night, and, though less distinctly, in her walking thoughts by day. Her heart had been filled with new and deep sensations, —so powerful that the blessed daylight sometimes became wearisome to her, and she longed for night, because then again she should behold this spirit-love of hers. So overpowering was this new sense, thus strangely operating, that often, in the clear noon-day, she would shut her eyes, in the hope that in this semblance of sleep, when external objects were shut out, *he* would palpably arise before the vision of her mind. And it was a strange and strong peculiarity in this life-in-sleep, that while in dreams she traced and passed through a successive series of adventures with this creation of her fancy, her waking thoughts had but a

vague and uncertain impression of him and them. *Now* she saw him,—speaking, smiling, walking proudly amid a groupe of gallant gentlemen,—as glorious as ever he had appeared in the fair and boundless world of sleep.

The crowd of gallants passed on, Lord Hatton in the midst, and Edith Lee remained leaning against the old tree, straining her sight after them long after they had gone beyond her view. She did not heed his companions. She had not noted how many nor how few they were, or what their appearance. She only felt that she had seen *him*,—that he was a creature of life like himself, and that his evident rank removed him from her by a gulf which she could not pass.

Edith Lee's mind was so much the prey of these conflicting emotions, that she did not note how long she remained by the old tree. After a time, she became aware that somebody was standing opposite to her, carefully reading her features. She saw a middle-aged man, well-dressed, and dark-featured, with a coun-

tenance such as you could not give a plausible reason for not liking, and yet its expression such as one does not like to look upon. There was a sneer upon his thin, pale lips, and a sardonic gleaming in his glance, which, as their eyes met, made her feel uncomfortable. She would fain have moved from him, for his glance troubled her, but it seemed as if she had lost all power of voluntary motion and speech. He held her there with his glittering eyes, as the serpent fixes the wild birds in the depths of the Indian woods. He laid his hand upon hers, and the touch, light as it was, thrilled to the bone, and chilled her blood.

He spoke to her. His voice, though not unmusical in itself, grated harshly on her ear. He spoke in a tone low enough for a whisper, yet every syllable fell distinctly upon her ear, and sank into her heart.

"You soar high, lady-bird," said he. "It is a bold dove to seek a mate in the eagle's eyrie. You love that gay young lord—you would wed him?" he bent his face close to hers as he added, "and you *shall*."

She shrunk back from him, with unconcealed dislike, and the expression of his features became terrible in its demoniac beauty. "What, pretty one," he continued, "you shrink from your friend, who has the power and the will to remove the cottage flower, and place it in the glory of the palace gardens. Why, trembler! *I* have known your wishes, *I* have fashioned your dreams, until Sleep has become for you a life more beautiful than any reality you have yet known. Your heart rebelled against the lowly state in which you are placed, and that rebellious discontent gave me power over you. Lo, now! you shrink from my words, and you never shrank from my works. You even stand upon ground which is my own. Your foot rests upon the grave of a suicide.—You need not start! By his pride of heart he killed his mother; he stained a name which never until then had been tarnished by the breath of dishonour: he betrayed his country; he denied his God, and he came back a broken man, to hang himself from the very tree you lean against. In child-

hood's innocence he had played beneath its shade, and the huge branch that bore his quivering body withered from that hour. See, it hangs above you, leafless and barkless."

Edith Lee heard the words of mockery, and her spirit quailed beneath the scowl of that dark and mysterious man. She fell in a heavy faint, yet heard a whisper in the air, "If you would wed this young lord, meet me, at midnight, in the churchyard by Saint Martin's monastery."

It was dusk when she awoke. She left Lord Hatton's garden, unnoticed amid the crowd, and sought the solitude of her own little chamber. Here she thought upon what had passed, and shuddered, as she thought. Then she wept, and tears relieved her. Then she knelt down and prayed. That night her slumbers were peaceful as the repose of an infant.

But the morrow came, bringing back the old discontent which had vexed her spirit, together with new and stirring desires, which the sight of Lord Hatton had excited. Day after day

sped on, and there was an end now to the bright dreams which had made night so longed-for. The very lack of these sweet visions made her day-thoughts turn upon their living object. As she often saw him pass her door now, sometimes on foot, sometimes on horseback, always superior to his companions, and never bestowing upon her even the scanty homage of a transient glance, she was in no chance of forgetting him.

Weeks thus passed on. Then came the rumour that the young Lord Hatton was about to wed a royal ward. The news unnerved Edith Lee. *That night she did not pray.* So, the Tempter resumed his power over her, and she dreamed that she saw a bridal throng, and that *she* stood at the altar with Lord Hatton as the bridegroom. Then she awoke, and the moonlight glancing coldly in through the dull and narrow casement, dimly revealed the squalid poverty of her chamber. And then, once again, clear and low came the remembered whisper, "If you would wed this young lord, meet me, at

midnight, in the churchyard of Saint Martin's monastery."

She started from her bed, for the hour was at hand. She wound up the contention between the evil spirit and the better angel in her heart, by resolving to try whether the Stranger would, indeed, be at the rendezvous. No necessity, she thought in her pride, for compliance with his demands, should he make any and she deemed—foolish girl!—that he might be able, perhaps, to unfold or influence her future.

It was not difficult to leave her father's cottage, for Poverty has occasion for few bars and bolts. She stole out, with noiseless steps. —She came back in an hour, with pale cheeks, and wild eyes, and a throbbing brow. Whom she met, what passed, what pledges she received, what promises she returned, none ever knew; but it was said, in after times, that she had signed a contract—signed it with a pen dipped in her own blood—with the Great Enemy, to give herself to him, body and soul, at a future day, if he would procure her mar-

riage with the Lord Hatton.—She returned to her bed. She could not pray *now*.

Next day, as Edith Lee was standing at her father's door, a noble company of gallants rode by. One of them,—the chief—bent low to the beauty of Edith Lee, cap in hand, until his forehead touched the mane of his Barbary charger. That evening, and often after, he came to the cottage, unattended and disguised, vainly striving to gain the favour of Edith Lee—for the cunning of her sex taught her how coyness wins better than submission. That day month, to the wonder of all, Edith Lee became the bride of the Lord Hatton,

Who ought now to have been half so happy as Edith Lady Hatton? Her beauty was so exquisite that even the ladies of the Court admitted it to be scarcely wonderful that she wore the coronet so many had contended for. As if intuitively, she immediately assumed the manner of her new and exalted station, becoming it as if she had been born to it. All hearts admired, all eyes followed her. The breath of scandal never approached her. She

was a faithful and a loving wife. She was the idol of her husband, who thought nothing that wealth could procure, half good enough for her. So liberal was she in her largess to the poor, that wherever she went their gratitude loudly poured out prayers for blessings on her head. Yet, with all her beauty, state, and wealth, Edith Lee was *not* happy. One fatal remembrance cast its shadow upon her path.

In due time, an heir was born to her noble lord. Then the shadow upon Edith's brow appeared less dark, and her eyes lost some of the troubled expression, which it sometimes had grieved her loving husband to look upon. Now, more than ever, she gave great alms to the poor; but, even in the West Minster, to which she sometimes resorted with her husband and her household, neither her heart nor her lips were moved with prayer. Something heavy was upon her mind, forbidding her to pour out her troubled spirit before her Maker. But her alms to the poor were constant and ample, her gifts to the religious houses were great;

and hence it happened that the common voice spoke loudly of her piety, shown through her works,—as if Charity could atone for the lack of Faith. Yet, oftentimes, persons profess to believe, never showing that belief by their actions towards their fellow-men,—as if Faith could atone for the lack of Charity! It is then the casket without the jewel.

As years rolled on, Edith Lady Hatton appeared of lighter and livelier mood. For the most part, she now thought of the past as of an unpleasant memory, which might best be cast into forgetfulness. But there were times when she had awful forebodings, and terrible fears, and dread despair; when her eyes would have a fixed and stony glare, as if they saw in vacancy *that* which they hated to behold, yet could not avoid—when the bloom of beauty would leave the face, and an unnatural paleness succeed—when her lips would try to utter faint and hurried words of awe and supplication—when all the living, breathing world around her, would seem as nothing before the compelling power of that dreadful Presence,

invisible to all but her! At last, when a passion of tears had relieved her, she would anxiously inquire what she had spoken, and whether they could glean meaning from her words; and then would hide her face in her husband's bosom, and wonder at herself, or affect to wonder, for being so weak and womanly.

She had but the one child, a boy of great promise, who was barely fifteen when her husband died. She bestowed great care upon his education, and had him brought up in the fear and love of God. For herself, she now frequented the Minster more than ever. She was constant at matins and vespers; but she never knelt in the confessional; she prayed no prayer to God for pardon and for succour. It seemed to her, that she was secure from her enemy in the house of God, though even there she could pour forth no supplication for his grace, either in spoken words or spiritual thought.

The youth rose to manhood, as his father had done, and Edith made ample prepa-

ration for celebrating his twenty-first birthday.

Who can describe all the splendour of that brilliant festival?—the smiles and the glitter, the beauty and the glare! The choicest of the company assembled in a stately saloon, which extended the whole length of Hatton House. At the top of this saloon, was a chair of state for the Lady Hatton, who seemed almost as beautiful as in her early days of youth and maidenhood. Who so proud as that fond mother, looking lovingly upon her graceful and gallant son!

Upon the verge of midnight—the latest time, according to the etiquette of that epoch, to which the festivities could decorously be continued—the young Lord Hatton went to his mother, and entreated her to dance the last measure with him, and thus wind up a celebration which, he said, his heart could never forget. And, as he spoke, he took her hand in his, and pleasant tears filled his mother's eyes, as she looked upon him, and drank in the music of his low and earnest voice—soft

and low in its gentle pleading. For, as she looked and listened, there came back before the dreams of her youth, and their glad fulfilment; and she joyed to see by her side such a fair image of that father whom she had loved with a love which seemed as if it were indeed a portion of her very life.

The Lady Hatton smiled upon her son through her pleasant tears, as she told him that years had taken away the buoyancy of her spirit and of her motion; that she was loth to refuse him anything upon that happy day, and that she would even join with him in the dance, if he could not find a more suitable partner. As she spoke, she looked round upon the bright company of ladies who were present: but her son said, with a smile that, in truth, he had already danced with every other lady in the room; so that she had no further pretence for declining to gratify him. Then he led her to her place.

The dance was renewed, and the Lady Hatton and her son stood at the end of the saloon, that they might close the festival by

treading the last measure. Merrily sounded the music. Mirth filled all hearts, and flashed from every eye, and spoke from many a lip. Thus all went on pleasantly—even noisily, perhaps—until it now was almost time for the lady and her son to lead off the merry galliard, and with it conclude that joyous festival.

Hark! a loud crash at the outer door, as if a hundred rude hands were loudly striking upon it at once! A sudden pause in the music and the dance! A silence, as if a voice of command had sounded through the room—"Speak no more!"

Men looked inquiringly into each other's faces, as if to learn what could cause this strange noise at such an hour. Women stood, with paled faces and anxious eyes, in utter fear and wonderment. And then, after a minute's pause, all smiled at the interruption, and renewed the dance.

Presently, an attendant glided in, almost unperceived; but the Lady Hatton saw his quivering lips, white cheeks, and frightened eyes. He told her, in awed and broken

words, so low that no ear but hers could hear, that they had opened the door to a Stranger, who demanded instant audience with her. The lady sent back for answer (but her heart sank within her as she spoke), that he must be told this was neither time nor place for any but invited guests.

The attendant speeded to deliver this message, but quickly came back, with a more terror-stricken countenance than before, to say that He would take no denial, for his second and more imperative message was, that "there was One below who *must* have instant parley with the Lady, and his token was, their last meeting in the churchyard, by St. Martin's monastery."

Paler grew the Lady's cheek, as she heard this second message. There are times when the thoughts and the fears, the anxieties and the remorse, the pains and the regrets, the griefs and the despair of a life-time, can crowd upon the heart in one brief moment of intensest agony. Such a moment was that in which the Lady Hatton's mind, awed, unnerved,

horror-stricken, was rent by pangs such as never can be described. She grasped the chair which stood near her, and endeavoured to steady herself by its support. The room seemed to swim around her. Strange sights glanced before her eyes. Strange voices made unearthly sounds for her ears. But this bewilderment was brief, and her mind soon cleared, the terrible consciousness remaining, in fullest reality, that dreadful evil was about to befall her.

Meanwhile, the merry dance went on. It seemed as if no one had noticed the alteration, which, in little more than a minute, had taken place in the aspect of the Lady Hatton. Her cheeks were pale as marble; her eyes were dulled into a fixed and death-like stare; her lips had lost all colour; her frame was shaken with emotion. Her son, who stood a little behind her, was speaking gaily to a smiling maiden, with whom he had danced earlier in the evening, and, thus occupied, he did not observe and could not note, the strong heart-quake of emotion, which so greatly agitated his mother.

A heavy tramp of feet upon the stairs; yet no ear heard it except hers. The door was burst open, as if a mighty whirlwind had dashed it in. No one noticed it, and the dance went blithely on. A tall figure advanced to the Lady Hatton. Her cry of terror was stifled in her throat. The well-remembered glittering eyes were upon her, with their demoniac leer. She had now lost all power over herself, but retained consciousness and sensation. The dark Stranger, with a smile of mock courtesy which iced her life-blood, took her jewelled hand and led her forth to dance. Then, for the first time, the guests noticed his presence. A thick yellow cloud gradually filled the room, and, as its density increased, the pestilent vapour blinded the eyes, and rendered difficult the breathing of all.

When the cloud dispersed, in a few minutes, all looked for the Lady Hatton. But none could see her in the room. Her chair was crashed into many fragments. The carcanet which she had worn around her neck was found, shattered, on the floor. Of herself there

was no further trace—but the attendant, who had announced the fearful Stranger, declared that he had seen him lead her forth to dance, that he had whirled her round and round with resistless force, and that thus they had glided out of the saloon together.

In the midst of the wonderment, while they were yet listening to the broken sentences of the attendant, there suddenly arose a dreadful confusion in the disquieted air. High and shrill was heard a piercing shriek of bodily anguish. Then came unearthly laughter, as of a demon; and thus yell followed yell, while wild laughter, the dreadful merriment and mockery of a fiend, alternated with woman's shrieks of hopeless agony, and dread despair. After a time, all again was silence. Then, as with a sudden and simultaneous impulse, the guests rushed out of the house in a body. The young Lord Hatton, who had fallen into a swoon, was attended by skilful physicians, but many days elapsed before he awoke to consciousness.

In a remote part of Hatton Garden (beneath the very tree which shaded the grave of the

suicide, where Edith Lee had first seen Lord Hatton, and by which the Evil One had first spoken to her,) were found, the day after the festival, one lock of long, dark, silky hair, and a human heart, rent in twain, and bleeding. Fragments of flesh were found in various parts of that extensive garden, as if, indeed, a human being had been torn to pieces in the air, and scattered piecemeal on the earth. But it was beneath the old tree, and upon the mound which covered the unhallowed dust of the suicide, that the Bleeding Heart was found.

The young Lord Hatton, struck with awe at the terrible event, never more took his wonted place in the world. He became a brother of the Cistercian order of St. Martin, and gave his estates for the benefit of the monastery, on the condition that they gave a perpetual mass for the repose of his unhappy mother's soul. After a time, these estates were sold. The mansion was demolished, for none were willing to reside in it, the popular belief being, that at certain times, strange scenes were re-enacted within its walls. As the city increased, the

land was built upon, and one portion, now a populous street, retaining the familiar name of all, is called Hatton Garden to this day. Even yet, (although the particulars of the story have nearly fallen out of memory,) the place where the heart of the Lady Hatton was found, bears the name of BLEEDING-HEART YARD.

After this story had fairly run the gauntlet of criticism—which there is no occasion here to repeat—Mr. Butler again challenged our attention, and said that as, unfortunately, the German Student's Story had failed to please our friend Mr. Moran—who, as yet, had carefully avoided any contribution of his own to the general stock of tale-telling, he would venture on another, of a different sort, which he trusted would be more fortunate.

"My dear friend," said Moran, heartily, "I never meant to intimate that your story did not please me—but I am glad of the mistake, as it will get another story out of you. As

for myself—only wait until the next sitting, and I shall come out 'twenty thousand strong, like an Irish Rebellion,' with legends of all sorts from the other side of the Irish Sea."

"Mine," remarked Butler, "I shall ask permission to read, as I found it, this afternoon, among some other half-forgotten papers in my desk. It is a short affair—a sort of half-history sketch, as Lawrence used to designate his portraits of distinguished characters."

VI.

BEATRICE D'ESTE.

In one of the apartments of the palace of Versailles, in the suite immediately under, and in communication with, that occupied by Louis XIII. himself, reposed a man, enfeebled in health but of a giant mind, who had just achieved the greatest triumph of his life. Armand Jean du Plessis, better known in history and romance as the Cardinal Richelieu, had just beaten down every barrier between himself and Power—had succeeded, by a bold and adroit manœuvre, in persuading the King to banish Mary de Medici, the queen-mother, to Compeigne—and had obtained the

royal promise that, thenceforth, without *his* will, nothing of moment should be executed by the Ministry. It was, in short, the evening of the famous Tenth of November, 1630, ever afterwards known—from the manner in which the wily Cardinal had made his enemies' plots turn against themselves—as "The Day of the Dupes."

That day had been a stormy one, as far as the passions were concerned; and he, whose part it had been to "ride on the whirlwind," now lay, in deep repose, upon a couch which was placed before the ample and well-plenished fire-place. No light in the apartment, save that fitfully cast up from the fire:—not a sound. All was hushed while the Cardinal enjoyed the first slumber which his unquiet spirit had allowed him for a long time. It was the deep slumber of exhaustion. Mind and body had alike been overworked, and the quiet and dreamless sleep was alike grateful to both.

Even in the ante-chamber, where there usually is whispering, at least, all was hushed.

The pages held their breath. The armed guards stood, sat, or lay at listless lengths, as if they were so many mutes. Every one there knew how necessary it was for their master's health that he should enjoy the refreshment of repose—more than one physician had solemnly declared as much—and as, albeit harsh to the many, Richelieu was generous, gentle, and even kind, to the few who tended on him in the household or on guard, good care was taken by all that their master should remain undisturbed.

Two or three times, with stealthy steps, a youth named Jean de Lisle went into the room wherein the Cardinal reposed. Now, he adjusted the cushion, so as to raise the sleeper's head; anon, he arranged the fire, so as to divert its glow from the face to the person of the Cardinal. Silently did he glide into and from the apartment, and "He sleeps," given in the lowest of all possible whispers, was the only response he deemed it necessary to make to the questionings, more of looks than language, of his companions in the outer room.

Meantime, in the King's apartments, preparations had been made for a sumptuous banquet—one of the gorgeous entertainments which the thirteenth Louis had a passion for giving. Expectation was high on this occasion, for Cardinal Richelieu, who had just secured the proud position, which he quitted but when he quitted life, was known to be one of the invited guests ; and, while many were preparing, at the earliest opportunity, to pay homage to his greatness, all were curious to note how he should bear himself in that new position which made him virtual ruler of his country.

The hour had arrived. The guests had assembled. The King himself had entered. Richelieu was not there to receive him. The royal brow became clouded. Happily, St. Simon, the favourite, was at hand, and blandly suggested that, perhaps the Cardinal had been detained by State-affairs. A messenger was dispatched to summon him, and returned, in a few minutes, with his gay plumage somewhat ruffled. Inquiry was made as to the cause, and the answer was that, on repairing

to the Cardinal's apartments, a malapert attendant, known to the complainant as Jean de Lisle, had not only forbidden personal access to his Eminence, but had absolutely refused to convey any message to him. The King, amused rather than annoyed at this report, whispered to St. Simon, that he was half-inclined to go to Richelieu's rooms, and personally assure himself of the real cause of his absence. A monarch's wish is speedily in course of fulfilment. The King and the courtier stepped out of the gay saloon. Each threw a cloak over his rich dress, and immediately afterwards both had descended the stairs and were at the door which opened from the main corridor into the suite of rooms occupied by Richelieu.

They met with exactly the same reception as De Lisle had given to the palace-servant—no actual want of courtesy, but a firm refusal to admit any one into the privacy of his Eminence, the Cardinal, or even to convey any message to him.

"Not even from the King?" asked Louis.

"No," replied De Lisle; "not even from the King."

There was something at once exciting and inexplicable in this pertinacity, and Louis determined to solve the riddle.

"You will admit *me?*" said he, allowing his regal apparel and adornments to be seen from beneath the long roquelaire which covered him.

But the young man, albeit he bent his knee, as he recognized the monarch, still declared, that he dared not give admittance even to him.

What might have followed is uncertain—for Sovereigns, like many of their subjects, do not become milder for being opposed—but, at this moment, the door of the inner apartment opened, and Richelieu stood opposite to the King. To him Louis turned, and, in a tone of anger, and with an air of chagrin, asked wherefore access to him had been refused? Jean de Lisle was called on to explain, and justified his conduct by stating that seeing how much the health of the Cardinal his master, had been injured by want of

needful repose, he had ventured, on some small skill in medicine, and backed by the opinion of the physicians that sleep must be obtained by some means, if health were to be preserved—he had ventured to mingle an opiate with his drink for the afternoon repast, and was unwilling, at any risk, to allow the slumber thus obtained to be disturbed. The Cardinal, thanking De Lisle for the good he had wrought, and acknowledging how much he felt recruited by the repose he had obtained, entreated the King to pardon one whose fault had arisen out of the best motives.

Louis, whose fortune it ever had been to know many flatterers and but few friends, replied that, for his own part, he freely forgave what had been solely caused by regard for a Minister, whose life was so essential to the glory of France, and the honour of her King.

"But," added he, "if this servitor of yours, thus faithful, affectionate, and bold, will enter our service, we may shew him, better than by mere words, how much we esteem such fidelity, affection, and courage."

Jean de Lisle looked at Richelieu, who motioned him to kneel before the King. The jewelled hand of the monarch was graciously extended, and reverently kissed.

"Next to our own person," said Louis. "Ever at hand, and as vigilant for us as thou hast been for the Cardinal."

Thus, in a moment, the page of Richelieu was made one of the gentlemen of the King. This done, Louis and the Cardinal, followed by St. Simon and De Lisle, proceeded to the presence-chamber, where, of course, all proper homage was paid to the nominal and the actual possessor of powor.

Thus ended the famous "Journée des Dupes." The King lost his mother and gained a page. The Cardinal obtained sovereign sway—and a sound sleep.

Jean de Lisle was fortunate in having, from his childhood, been favoured with the protection of Cardinal Richelieu. When, at the age of two-and-twenty, Armand Jean du Plessis, was made Bishop of Luçon, his elevation was attributable, in some degree, to the friendship

of the Count de Lisle, then in the service and honoured with the confidence of Henry the Fourth. He had known Armand's family, had received kindness from them, and was happy in being able to return it, in some degree, by recommending his friend as well qualified, from ability, no less than a taste for letters, for the vacant see. In doing this, he had given the first impetus to the fortunes of him who, as Cardinal and Duc de Richelieu, fills many a page in the annals of France. But the elder De Lisle died suddenly — even before his royal master fell under the knife of the fanatic, Ravaillac, and bequeathed his only son to the friendship of Richelieu. The trust had been faithfully executed. The best education of the time had been bestowed upon Jean de Lisle, and, for some years past he had occupied a place in the confidence and near the person of his patron. He had been page, until he had out-grown all appearance of such an office, and had latterly been more of an aide-de-camp, (for, like the King, the Cardinal affected the protective state of a body-guard of his

own) and his skill in all warlike exercises well qualified him for a post at once so important and confidential. It has already been told with what devotedness he devoted himself in the service of the Cardinal.

The change which had taken place in his position, while it placed him immediately in attendance on the King, did not weaken his attachment to the Cardinal. Grateful for the notice constantly and kindly taken of him by the King, a warm attachment for his Majesty sprang into De Lisle's mind; and when Louis perceived this—his *amour propre* somewhat flattered by the constant evidence of such affection—he, in turn, began to feel an interest in the young cavalier. Is that wonderful?—Is it not much to know, that even *one* heart cherishes esteem, regard, and love for you? The confidence which Louis placed in De Lisle was great, as may be judged from a circumstance which is now to be related.

After the Queen-Mother's enforced departure, some of her suite remained in Paris; but, when the Cardinal had reason to believe that

some of them so remained as spies, he peremptorily named a day before which each and all of them should quit Paris, and determined that, without any exception, such as were not natives of France should return to their proper birth-land.

Beatrice d'Este, a maiden of exalted rank, and extreme beauty, was one of the ladies thus destined, by the Cardinal's supreme will, to return home. She had been sent on a visit to Mary de Medici, about two years before, and by her had been treated as a friend and equal.

The retinue which was to escort her was placed under the command of Jean de Lisle. It was part of the King's policy, as counselled by Richelieu, to maintain the appearance of perfect respect towards the banished Queen-Mother, and he well knew that she would be pleased to learn that her favourite friend, the young Beatrice, had been sent back to her Italian home under the protection of the trustiest, and most confidential of all his younger men-at-arms.

They left Paris. The power of Richelieu, which few dared dispute, had obtained a safe-conduct for the party through Germany and the Italian States. Pleasant enough was the journey, made in easy stages, from a desire not to fatigue the lady. Soon, thrown into constant, hourly communion with her, as the leader of her escort, De Lisle had learned how powerful are the bonds which association forges. Had he seen Beatrice at the Court of King Louis, he might have passed her by without notice; for, who, amid a galaxy, will single out one "bright, particular star,"—but here, and thus, ever at her side, vigilant for her safety, careful for her comforts, anxious to amuse her, he had opportunity for learning that the maiden had greater beauty than that of form or feature—that her mind was bright with intelligence—that she was a being to be loved, even, though, he feared, she was too far above him for Hope, the castle-builder, to fancy as within his reach. With the damsel the case was not very dissimilar. Beatrice d'Este had unconsciously permitted the young cavalier to

have an interest in her heart, had accustomed herself to take pleasure in his society, was pleased to see with what grace he sate his horse, was charmed with the frankness of his conversation, was puzzled at thinking whether she had seen any other young noble of such manifold merits, and did not care to meditate on the improbability that, this journey ended, she might never again behold him.

Forward they went. Through France into Germany. Soon was imperial Innspruck left behind—next the Julian Alps were passed—and then they went down by Treviso, and through learned Padua. At last, they were within the territory of Ferrara, where the journey was to terminate. Scarcely had the little cavalcade entered that territory, when an event of some importance took place.

Beatrice d'Este, niece to Alfonso II. of Ferrara—the prince whose harsh treatment of Torquato Tasso has given him an infamous memory—had been sent to Paris, by desire of certain of the nobility most devoted to the house of Este, in order to obtain the influ-

ence of Mary de Medici in her favour. On Alfonso's death, without a male heir, Pope Clement VIII. had declared that the papal fiefs held by the house of Este had lapsed to the Church. Duke Cesar, who had succeeded Alfonso, surrendered the Ecclesiastial fiefs, but retained possession of those which were held under the Empire. The nobility of Ferrara, who disliked him for his illegitimate birth, submitted to his retention of Modena and Regio, but were much disinclined to allow him to rule over themselves. On the other hand, they objected to being transferred to the dominion of the Church, and had secretly solicited Mary de Medici to assert the claims of Beatrice d'Este to the fiefs of Ferrara, which her family had held so long. Before Mary was exiled to Compeigne, she had not been able to bring the subject, as its importance required, before the favourable notice of her son, Louis XIII. Far and near as his espionage extended, Richelieu could not remain ignorant of the pretentions of Beatrice. While they were not asserted for her, or by her, he saw no cause for interference.

It happened, rather singularly, that the person most interested cared little for the honours which her friends wished to restore to her. Beatrice d'Este would have much preferred the quietude of retirement to the gilded pomps of such a sovereignty as that of Ferrara.

The Castle of Este, not very far from Padua, was still held for Beatrice, as portion of the property which had been the dowry of her mother. Thither the travelling party were now speeding,—two of them rather mournful, it must be confessed, at the thought that *there* would terminate the acquaintance and companionship which both had found so pleasant. However, they were not destined to part quite so soon.

Italy was overrun at that time by gangs of robbers, who had pretty good information respecting travellers of note, the course they meant to take, and the property they carried with them. In the vicinity of Este one of these lawless gangs had located. The little party commanded by De Lisle had scarcely entered the defile leading to the Castle, when

it was suddenly attacked by these armed ruffians. The assailants were superior in numbers; but the gallantry of the French men-at-arms prevailed, and the robbers were beaten off with heavy loss. Jean de Lisle was seriously wounded in the melée, and it was fortunate for him that the Castle of Este was so near the place of contest.

It is scarcely necessary to say that within those walls, De Lisle received every attention which his sufferings required. Months elapsed ere he was convalescent, and the French escort under his command had long since been dismissed. Beatrice d'Este certainly did not neglect the young champion, who had suffered so much in her cause. But, latterly, as his strength became renewed, and it was evident that he would be able to return to Paris before long, the maiden grew unusually thoughtful, more addicted to solitary musings than of yore, and evidently making efforts,—not always very successfully,—to give as little of her society to De Lisle as strict courtesy could warrant. Love, without her having dreamt

of such a thing, had become the inmate of her bosom. Her female attendants, with the natural shrewdness and sympathy of their sex and age, had observed this long before she had even a suspicion how the case stood; but then, "the lookers-on see more of the game than the players."

The day of departure was named. Beatrice, heart-weary with the tumult of conflicting feelings, had withdrawn from all human observation, and had taken a favourite seat on the flat roof of her habitation. It was in the soft and gentle twilight, and hither, at that hour, she had long been wont to come, with her embroidery, her lute, her pencil, or her book. But now, they were all neglected. The impassioned lines of poetry were in her hand, —page after page had been turned over and gazed at, but she knew not what the pages said. Her abstraction was so great that she neither heard nor heeded the familiar footstep by her side. The whispered "Beatrice!" awakened her from her soft day-dream, and she startled, with a blush and a quickened

pulse, when she saw that her solitude was disturbed by him of whom she had been thinking.

Silence for a season:—oh, who will say that such silence is voiceless? Then came the hurried words of thanks for kindnesses given and received,—last of all, the "Farewell." To speak that word De Lisle had now sought this audience. The morrow's eve was to see him far away from Este, and all it contained. She knew it. Still she made no answer. Listlessly did the fair hand droop as it held the volume which had been unread that evening. The volume dropped from that little hand. De Lisle took it up, saw that her name was written in it, pressed his lips to that dear name and delicate writing, and put the volume into his bosom. Paler grew the lady's cheek,—softer became the gentle beauty of those dark eyes, at once liquid and lustrous. And then in flattering words, De Lisle repeated the thanks he had already spoken for all the courtesy he had received. Last came the "Farewell."

"You will think of Este,—sometimes?" said the Princess.

"As Adam remembered the Eden he had quitted, and never hoped to see again!"

"You will think of those whom you have known in Este?—you have many friends within these walls."

"It is impossible that I can forget. The time I have so happily passed here will stand in my memory, amid the wastes of future days, a green spot which no sirocco can destroy."

"Ah," said she, with a gentle smile, "you will some day return hither, if it be only for an hour, to let me know that the wounds you received in my defence have not seriously injured you?"

"Never," he exclaimed. "I dare not return. I look upon Este and its mistress for the last time."

He approached her. Not to crowned Empress could he have bent a lowlier knee. He took the white hand which hung by her side, and raised it to his lips. Marble-cold was

the touch. He looked anxiously upon the maiden's face,—it was white and rigid as the Parian bust. She had fainted. By degrees, the colour returned, and those coral lips and sunny cheeks once again flushed up with life, —the eyes resumed their light,—a rosy hue suffused brow, face, and neck,—the little hand, now warm and flexible, made an effort for release. But, in that brief time, De Lisle had been thrilled with impulsive hope,—sudden, but strong. He still knelt by her side. The hand which he retained in his, he ventured to press,—the pressure was not reproved, perhaps it was returned. A flood of tears relieved the concentrated passion of the maiden's heart. Her head reclined upon his shoulder,—she raised it and looked into his eyes. What soft confession in that look! Then,—but who can describe the indescribable?

Jean de Lisle did *not* quit the Castle of Este on the morrow, as he had proposed.

But how answer to King Louis for the default?

Cardinal Richelieu sat in the very apart

ment in which, some months before, he had reposed on "The Day of the Dupes," when Jean de Lisle had prevented the King's entrance. Before him was a newly-arrived letter. The King occupied a chair opposite to his Minister.

The Cardinal cut the silken floss which encircled the missive, broke the seal, and silently read the letter. He smiled. The King said, "Good news, my Lord?"

"As your Majesty may take it," answered Richelieu. "From this letter, which has reached me within the hour, I learn that our protégé, De Lisle, has relieved us of the trouble of caring further for his fortunes. He has wooed and won the Princess Beatrice d'Este, and acquaints me that he solicits, and awaits your royal permission to wed her. If I know him well, as I think I do, he will wed her whether that permission be given or withheld. Rome, as I learn from these other despatches, is most anxious to retain the fief Ferrara, which it resumed on the death of Duke Alfonzo without legitimate male heir.

Methinks that by permitting Jean de Lisle to wed the daughter of Este, which would for ever annihilate her claims to the sovereignty, we may please the Holy See, and, by representing the union as of our own suggestion, with a view to thus securing the continued possession of the fief to the Church, we may gain as an equivalent the concession we have so long sought in the matter of nominating to the French Sees."

"Be it so," answered the King. "But what will the newly-wedded have to live upon ?"

"The Princess Beatrice," said Richelieu, "has the rich dowry of her mother, equal to the estates of any Duke in France."

"I am glad of it," said the King: "but we must not send a barren message to De Lisle. We must retain him as a subject of France, by giving him a Huguenot's confiscation. And should he bring his bride to Paris, assure her of a favourable reception."

"No doubt," observed the Cardinal. "Your Majesty has a paternal regard for youth and beauty."

The Count De Lisle never returned to France. He and his Beatrice lived and died at Este. They were happy in their lives, and it is recorded that their death took place, even as they desired, on one and the same day.

"That," remarked Tressilian, "is the only story I have ever heard, in which Richelieu figures without being represented as a bloodthirsty, unconscienable, tiger-like character. It has always appeared to me that History has rendered but scanty justice to that truly great man. He broke down the intolerance and ascendency of the haughty *noblesse* of France, and raised an independent monarchy upon their ruins. Whatever his offences—and I grant that he was unscrupulous, looking at the end without being particular as to the means, —he attempted to build up a great monarchy, and he succeeded. He breathed new life into the dry bones of a realm, and made it, while he survived, the arbiter of Europe. If he did

not free the People, let it be asked were they fit for freedom? But was not he the friend of the Many, the enemy of their oppressors? Before his watchful vigilance and anticipating genius there disappeared successively, as it arose, the domestic treason and the foreign antagonism. We hear much of his cruelties—but chiefly because he struck at high places. He might, unquestioned, have swept thousands of serfs from off the face of the earth, but when his blow reached the haughty noble, who would at once have coerced the Monarch and oppressed the People, he was accused of cruelty, when, in fact, what appeared the caprice or the wilfulness of power, was but a strong and necessary instance of prevention or punishment. In his time, the peasant was literally nobody. The Noble oppressed, and the State taxed him—and the real strife was between civil contest and civil government. Thanks to Richelieu, the latter prevailed. Power, for the mere sake of power, was not coveted by the Cardinal-Minister: his aspirations, singularly unselfish, had only one aim—the elevation of France

among the kingdoms of the earth, and to achieve this he felt that there must be a Government strong enough not only to put down, but by its undoubted character for strength, to *prevent* the outbreaks of civil contest which, in preceding reigns, had made France so divided against itself. He was a worthy successor of Sully. The charge of ingratitude to Mary de Medici, the queen-mother, which has been so strongly and so often brought against Richelieu, appears exceedingly ill-founded. True, she had originally been his patron, but he adhered to her cause, against his own interest, until he saw that her adherence to the political system of the House of Hapsburg would be ruinous to France. To elevate his native country was the constant and consistent object of his life; and, therefore, not from ingratitude to the Queen-Mother, but from exceeding love for France, he insisted on her banishment to Compeigne, which took place, as you have heard, on the famous 'day of the dupes.'

"I am unwilling to interrupt your vindication," said Butler, "and admit the force of much

of it, but I cannot concede that Richelieu's vices are defensible, simply on the score of patriotism."

"Vices are never defensible," answered Tressilian. "But my argument is, if Richelieu were unscrupulous, stern, vindictive, and designing, he never was unnecessarily so. What he did seems to have been forced upon him. Craft was employed against him—he met it with superior craft. His life was constantly aimed at—he punished the intended assassins, and those who set them on. Ingenuity of every kind was exercised to disgrace him—he met it with a deeper subtlety than was employed against him. If he punished crime, he rewarded merit; he selected the best men to work under him in every department of the State; he undertook war, not from the lust of conquest, but the necessity of preserving the honour and independence of France against the incroachments of Austria; and at his death France was more prosperous than at any preceding period of her history."

"At all events," said Butler, "he was in

every way superior to Cardinal Mazarin, who has obtained a great name on the very slightest grounds. But for his being supported by Anne of Austria, whom he is believed to have secretly married, he would never have been able to retain power during the minority of Louis XIV. There was something bold and independent in the conduct of Richelieu, but Mazarin loved to work in the dark, and was as treacherous as he was crafty. Richelieu would have raised money on his Cardinal's hat, if it were required for the exigencies of the State; but Mazarin's constant endeavour was to rob the public, and hoard for his own gratification. Richelieu certainly possessed greatness of character, and elevation of mind—Mazarin was simply a sly, mean man, unscrupulous and acute, without any redeeming points. He cared much for himself, and little for France; which he governed as tyranically as he dared; while, if Richelieu were the Dictator of that country, he stands nobly out as its Benefactor also."

"Now," said the Artist, "that you have agreed on what points you are to disagree, in

the estimate of Richelieu's character, perhaps you will listen to another story—a tradition, which I picked up in Germany, and happen to recollect now—whether opportunely or not, I leave this gracious company to determine."

VII.

A LEGEND OF CHARLEMAGNE.

WHENEVER any of my friends next visit Germany, I would recommend them to visit a very peculiar and (to me, at least,) a very interesting part of the country. Pass from Dover to Calais—from Calais to Paris, where you may pleasantly and profitably devote a few weeks to examination of what the high ambition of Napoleon would have made "the miniature metropolis of the universe,"—from Paris to Strasburg, where you *must* visit the Cathedral, the finest Gothic building in Europe, the most symmetrical in its beautiful harmony of proportion, the most graceful and elegant,

because the most pure and simple in its architecture—from Strasburg to Baden, where you will find an English population—from Baden to Heidelberg, whose famous tun is extant, but without one drop of Rhenish in its capacious bulk—and from Heidelberg to Frankfort-on-the-Maine.

This is a long route, and you may fancy that my object is to give you an itinerary. You will find that Fancy, for the thousandth time, has deceived you. I have only brought you to the scene of a story which possesses some interest—if I do not mar it in the telling.

Frankfort lies on the right bank of the river Maine. As you intend visiting it, I shall not forestall your pleasure by any attempt at description. I hate your guide-books which tell you how this was built, and how that was burned—telling you what to admire, and what to neglect—pointing out beauties and defects one would much rather discover with his own eyes. You have nothing to see, when all is anticipated by these impertinent tell-tales. You leave the place with a growl at the

tedious minuteness of the guide-book, and heartily lament having ever seen it. Ascertain what is to be seen—see it with your own eyes, without adopting the dogmatical opinions of any one, and eschew all guide-books, until you have quitted the locality.

You may rest at Frankfort for a few days. Perhaps you will examine the Cathedral, with its beautiful, but unfinished tower,—or you may lounge into the Römer, within whose ancient walls the German Emperors were elected and crowned. The senate of Frankfort now hold their sittings in the Election Chamber, and there is shewn their copy of the far-famed Golden Bull. When you have seen these things, unless you happen to arrive before the Michaelmas fair, second only to that of Leipsic,) you have beheld all that Frankfort has to boast of, can leave it, without regret, to accompany me up the Maine to the village of Selingenstadt, (The Abode of Bliss,) distant about a dozen miles.

This village is delightfully situated, close by the bank of the river. It has a large forest in

its rear, an outskirt of the Spessart; as fine champaign on the opposite bank before it. High above the humble dwellings which compose this little place, stands The Red Tower, an edifice known to the lovers of romance.

The best house in the village is the Auberge, over which, when I was there, some years ago, a host presided, whose capacious size and rotund figure, involuntarily reminded me of the late Daniel Lambert, of obese memory. The Herr Von Cothen was a genuine German; his merschaum seldom left his lips, except when the wine-cup (an hereditary goblet of massy silver, won by one of his ancestors at a mighty drinking-bout) was raised to moisten them. The man seemed to live but for the purpose of smoking, sleeping and drinking. Not that he ever was known to be what is called "disguised in liquor," — but, as his figure resembled an animated feather-bed, he protested that such a huge quantity of clay required moisture, and assuredly he took good care to moisten it.

It was my fortune to know him for the

space of three months, and I can safely say that, with one exception, I never knew him deviate from his triad of practices—the aforesaid drinking, smoking, and sleeping. The Herr Von Cothen, had a great dislike to the labour of conversation. His "puff" went for a signal of assent, and a nod denoted a negative. Was he angry?—a quick succession of short whiffs told his wrath. Was he pleased?—the tabacine vapour gracefully rose in curly wreaths round his head, like a fog rising out of the Thames.

The exception to his wonted taciturnity was in this wise. We had spent a pleasant day in what was the Spessart forest, and were returning home when the Red Tower met our view. We were weary, and threw ourselves on the mossy bank, beneath the shade of a mighty tree, where, in brief space, both of us fell asleep. I was awakened by the voice of my companion. I kept silence, when the redoubted Herr Von Cothen broke into an unexpected burst of eloquence, dilating long and loudly on the delights of the feudal days,

when the lord had the power of life and death, within his territorial limits, over his vassals. He spoke well enough for a German host,—but the novelty was his speaking at all! True, he kept his eyes closed all the time, and there was not a very lucid order in what he said, but this was pardonable in one to whom language had almost fallen into disuse. Von Cothen lay on the ground at listless length, beneath the mighty tree, while telling a tale somewhat to the following effect.

Some centuries ago, there was an Emperor Nero,—no relation to him of Rome,—who came, after the manner of the times, to celebrate his Christmas holidays at Frankfort. He was devotedly fond of the chase, and held nearly an equal affection for his daughter, a maiden over whom some seventeen summers had lightly flown. She was, indeed, if there be truth in legendary report, a very delightful, beautiful, and innocent creature. But her

personal charms were even less than the rare purity of her mind—the soft and gentle character of her feelings. Born in a cottage, she would have cheered the peasant's lot; brought up amid the magnificence of an Imperial Court, she won the earnest admiration of one sex, and scarcely excited the envy of the other. Such beauty of person and goodness of heart, could not remain unknown; and (as she was an only daughter,) many of the Princes of the Empire preferred their claims to her hand. But the maiden's heart was pre-engaged, and therefore she paid little attention to the compliments of her many princely and noble suitors.

Clorinda, thus was she called, had set her affections upon one far beneath herself in rank. Like

> "The King's daughter of Hongarie,
> Who loved a squire of low degree,"

the Emperor Nero's daughter had given her heart's first love to a young man, estimable in every point, but of no higher station than that of one of her father's huntsmen.

It is impossible to say how the secret was discovered, but discovered it certainly was. The Princess was placed in close confinement, and her lover would have been summarily and severely dealt with, if he had not taken flight. Pursuit was useless, no one knowing in what direction he had fled. To do the young man justice, he had anticipated the discovery of a secret dear to him as his life, and had taken steps accordingly. Deep in the hidden haunts of the Spessart, he had found a cave, probably the former residence of solitary sanctity, and he had made the best provision in his power for that decisive step which, love whispered, the Princess would not refuse to take, for his sake—and her own! While she, in tears, sat in the solitude of her chamber, her Ludolf was busy in making preparations for her rescue.

Whenever Princesses fall in love with their father's huntsmen, it is usual for Royalty to be utterly appalled. Accordingly, (as has already been intimated,) the Emperor went into a most magnificent passion, and gave strict

orders that his daughter should be confined to her own chamber. One morning, however, he made the discovery, just a few hours too late, that the lady-bird had flown—like Love, when, as the song tells us,

"He opened the window and flew away."

The poor man, albeit an Emperor, *had* a heart, and much lamented his daughter's absence. He pined after her so bitterly, that not an unmarried lady of the Court, but would have been glad to have consoled him—had he offered her his hand. But, much to the disappointment of their philanthropic intentions, his Majesty could not, or would not, see how to atone for the loss of a daughter, by taking a wife.

The Princess and her Ludolf, (who had assisted her out of "durance vile,") lived as happily beneath the greenwood tree, as if there never had been such things as Courts and Kings, Emperors and Principalities. They loved one another earnestly and constantly; nor—but this was long ago—had they any

wish to return to the crowds of society. It was fortunate that they had not, for, without the slightest chance or hope of forgiveness, it would have been most perilous to attempt it.

Meantime, the loss of his daughter was more and more felt by the Emperor. She was the last living thing round which his affections were entwined, and the heart of the father and the man was shaken by the uncertainty of her fate, and her absence from those places, over which her smiles had once thrown a radiance. The old man's grief was deep, but he said little. Pride would not permit him to yield to open lamentations, but in secret he shed many a tear. His household gods were shivered by his hearth.

He quitted Frankfort, and many years elapsed before he again saw the place with which were linked so many, and such sad recollections. He had laid aside his usual sports—the huntsman's spear had rarely been held by him since the day on which he had lost a daughter : and it was with some surprise that the Court heard him announce

that he would hold a hunting-match on the morrow.

Five years had lessened his endurance of fatigue, and it was with some pleasure that, at the close of the day, when the ardour of the chase had separated him from his suite, he found himself beside a rustic hut, at the door of which two lovely children were playing. To dismount from his weary steed, to enter the cottage, and to request refreshment, was but the work of a moment, and immediate preparations were made for his repast.

The Emperor had fallen upon the residence of his long-lost and still-loved daughter. Ludolf was a successful deer-hunter, and the fruits of the earth furnished them with other food. Besides, as Ludolf had learned that the Emperor had quitted Frankfort soon after the flight of the Princess, he felt little hesitation in visiting the market there, to exchange deer and other skins for necessaries, and sometimes for a few of the luxuries to which his Clorinda had been accustomed, all of which she had abandoned for him. Frugal in their

habits and their desires, they had lived happily, without a wish for change.

The graceful girl had budded into the glorious maturity of womanhood; and, farther changed by her rustic attire, the Emperor did not recognize his child. She knew him at a single glance, and then came quick-throbbing memories of the past, wild hopes of the future.

The sole repast which they could provide on the instant was some venison, poached by Ludolf in the Emperor's own forest. What limit is there to Woman's wit, when aided by Woman's affection? Clorinda prepared the repast with her own hands, serving up a dish which she remembered to have been a favourite with her father,—of which, too, he had never eaten, except when it was prepared by his daughter's hands. Scarcely had he tasted the food ere his tears began to fall, bitterly and fast, for her whose memory neither time could efface, nor anger destroy, and he eagerly enquired from whom his young hostess had learned to prepare that dish?

The Princess and her husband fell at the old man's feet. The Emperor was still a father,—his kind heart remembered only that his daughter was before him. All was forgotten and forgiven. He named the place Selingenstadt, or the Abode of Bliss (in double commemoration of his dinner and his daughter);—he carried the happy family with him to his palace,—ate his favourite meal of venison as often as he wished, to his dying day,—and built the Red Tower, as a summer residence for his daughter. The lovers (for so they had miraculously continued, although they were married) built a church where their hut had stood, and when they died, their ashes rested within its hallowed walls.

Such were the authentic particulars monologued by the Herr Von Cothen. The next day, I made some enquiries from him respecting parts of the story which seemed obscure,—

particularly with a view to supply a paragraph to the Almanach des Gourmands, as to the nature of the savoury mess of venison which softened the Emperor's heart, while it filled his stomach,—but the old man stoutly and sternly denied having uttered a syllable on the subject, appealing to *his* well-known taciturnity as evidence that *he* did not belong to the class of story-tellers,—a race for whom he avowed a most thorough contempt. He admitted, however, that I had picked up the popular legend in some way, but persisted in denying that *he* had been the narrator! Every one declared it impossible that my host *could* have told a story, and so I was compelled to appear satisfied with this contradiction, although it by no means gave me an exalted opinion of the Herr Von Cothen's veracity.

Some months afterwards, as I was looking at Titian's "Assumption of the Virgin," in the Dresden Gallery, I was accosted by Augustus Saalfield, whom I had known at Göttingen. We spent the day together, and I

told him, among other things, the mistake (to call it by a light name) into which Von Cothen had fallen, respecting the narration of this legend. Saalfield smiled, and dissipated my wonder by the information that, to *his* certain knowledge, the worthy host of the Abode of Bliss, was a somnambulist, and an excellent story-teller,—in his sleep!

I learned, at the same time, that the legend in question took its origin from the fact that Selingenstadt witnessed the loves, and still preserves the mortal remains of Eginhard and Emma, the secretary and daughter of Charlemagne.

Tradition made the mistake of changing a few names and adding a few details;—thus for Charlemagne, we have Nero,—and Ludolf and Clorinda stand muster for Eginhard and Emma. The Red Tower (now sadly dilapidated) was the residence of the lovers, after Charlemagne saved his daughter's reputation by giving her hand to his secretary. Eginhard built a church upon the spot, and his bones and those of his beloved, repose

beneath its roof, in a massy antique sarcophagus. Thus it is, that in all cases where fact is viewed through the coloured lens of Tradition, the narrative takes a shape somewhat remotely resembling the original, but it is difficult to determine how much is fiction, and how much the reverse.

"The idea," said Butler, "of your calling that story, 'A Legend of Charlemagne,' has been suggested, no doubt, by the *lucus a non lucendo* of our school-boy days,—inasmuch as the great Emperor is *not* the hero. Nevertheless, what's in a name?—and, believe me, we are all obliged to you for introducing us to the Herr Von Cothen, worthy resident in the Abode of Bliss. I have visited that village more than once, but was never so fortunate as to have met that individual."

"Perhaps not," said Crayon, smiling,—"perhaps he is one of the 'spirits from the

vasty deep,' who decline making their appearance to all who call them?"

"Seriously, however," remarked Tressilian, "is it not wonderful, when we consider to what uttermost parts of the world story-tellers have gone for *matériel*, that so few have brought Charlemagne before us? And yet his adventures have filled many of the pages of History, and he may be taken, however considered, as one of the greatest monarchs and conquerors the world has seen."

"The greatness of the man's character," answered Crayon, "may have caused the difficulty,—and yet, a like cause has not preserved Napoleon from being served up as the hero of romantic fiction."

"I have often thought," said Butler, "how odd it is that the most obvious sources of romance have been carefully avoided by us who write. Alexander, Cæsar, Mahomet, and Alfred have been left exclusively to the dramatists, at home and abroad. Charlemagne, as Sir Julian remarks, has been quite neglected. Another, who figures, it is true, in Eastern

story has been quite overlooked by European writers. It was only the other day, as I was glancing over D'Herbelot, that I found occasion to wonder at our neglect of that magnificent prince, the Caliph Haroun al Raschid. One incident in his reign struck me as peculiarly capable of being 'improved' by the romancist.

"His favourite Vizier was a young man named Giafar al Barmeki—his favourite sister was the beautiful Abassa. The customs of the East forbade the Vizier's admission into the domestic privacy of the Caliph. But, to effect this, and thus obtain the constant companionship of a friend so dearly loved, Haroun resolved that Giafar should espouse Abassa, and thus, as brother-in-law, obtain unrestricted admission to the harem at all times. Fearful, however, that by the children of such an union, the succession of his own sons might eventually be disturbed, and the sceptre pass into the hands of the Barmecides, the determination was formed by Haroun to stipulate that this marriage should be one of name and not of fact—and that Gia-

far should not aspire to any particular intimacy with the Princess Abassa, although he was permitted to see her when he pleased. The lady was beautiful, both were young, and the unrestricted companionship into which they were thrown, led to a result which might have been anticipated, although, on Giafar's part, there was a lengthened struggle between duty and passion. At length, the Caliph became aware of the violation of the unnatural compact which he had made with Giafar. With a sternness of purpose, which embittered the rest of his life, Haroun—forfeiting the surname of The Just (al Raschid)—doomed Giafar to death, banished the Barmecides to the remotest province of his empire, forbade, on pain of death, that any person should make mention of this unfortunate family, and exiled his sister Abassa to a distant part of his dominions, where she died, after a short struggle with poverty. Thus, in one fell swoop, was ruin brought upon Giafar al Barmeki and his princely race. Long did the Persians retain a grateful recollection of that family. Long after the doom had fallen heavily upon

them, an aged follower, named Mondier, had the boldness to place himself, day after day, on the ruins of one of their demolished dwellings, and there recite their noble actions, eulogizing their generosity, and lamenting their decay. This contumacy was reported to the Caliph, who condemned him to death. Mondier requested that, before the sentence was executed, he should be brought into Haroun's presence. This was granted, and, at some length, and with much eloquence, he repeated to the Caliph the numerous and heavy obligations which the Barmecides had conferred upon him. Moved by his words, the Caliph not only pardoned him, but presented him with a golden vase which stood upon a table in the audience chamber. Receiving this from Haroun's own hands, and prostrating himself, according to the eastern custom, the old man exclaimed, 'Behold yet another favour which I receive at the hands of the Barmecides.' This saying of Mondier, says D'Herbelot, has since passed into a proverb throughout Asia.—I am much mistaken, if these incidents, considered with relation to the

time, the country, and the sovereign, do not contain sufficient for the pen of Genius to weave into a very brilliant romance."

"Indeed they do," said Crayon, "but where is the Magician who can work the miracle now? We have wandered from Charlemagne to his contemporary Haroun, and I return to him to mention an incident which the Painter, as well as the Author, might take up and illustrate with force and effect. Charlemagne died in 814—exactly a thousand years before his successor, Napoleon, was first precipitated from the Empire. The Monk of Angoulême, relates that, when Charlemagne was inhumed, in a vault beneath the Church of Aix-la-Chapelle, which he had built, he was left seated in a Chair of State, with an Imperial diadem upon his head, imperial robes covering his body, a jewelled sceptre in his left hand, and his right upon the pummel of his good sword *Joyeuse*, —as renowned in the West, as Haroun's *Samsamah* was in the East, Orlando's *Durlinara*, or the Cid's *Tizona*, or our Arthur's famed *Excalibur*—and in his lap the simple scrip,

which he had worn in his journeyings to Rome. It strikes me that pen or pencil might take such an incident as the discovery of the mortal remains of Charlemagne, thus adorned with the trappings of Empire, and produce something, at once truthful, effective, and picturesque, 'which the world would not willingly let die.'"

"Particularly," said the Major, "if the discovery of the dead Emperor took place a thousand years after in the presence of a living one. I have a dim recollection of having heard that Napoleon was present when the vault was opened and the truth of the tradition proven. I am confident, at any rate, that Napoleon certainly did visit that vault—there he might reflect on the uncertainty of mortal things, though, at that time, his power appeared as if it rested upon a foundation secure as that upon which Charlemagne had founded *his*. The prison-rock of St. Helena did not then loom in the distance. I admit, that pen or pencil might advantageously seize such an incident as this—though, as the action was

momentary ; it appears as if the Painter could more appropriately claim it as within his province."

"It is not yet too late for one more story," said Lady Morton, "and I have to announce that, when we hear it, we shall arrange for our excursion to-morrow. So much to be seen, and so little time to see it in!—we must live in hope of a future and a longer visit to Matlock."

"I understand," said Tressilian, with a significant look, "that Matlock is in considerable request with the newly-wedded during the first weeks of matrimony, so perhaps your Ladyship's next visit may not be very distant."

Her Ladyship blushed, but did not appear willing to provoke, by replying to, the badinage of Sir Julian. "It would be too great a stretch of a lady's authority," said she, "to *command* the Major to relate the concluding story of the evening, but he may allow me to *request* him to do so."

The request was as authoritative as a command, and, after a little reflection, the Major

announced that he hoped he could recollect the main points of an adventure which had occurred, not long before, across the Channel. The circumstances, as he told them, were those which follow.

VIII.

THE LAST THROW OF THE DICE.

Two or three years ago, the Marquis Angelo Foscarini was induced, by ill health and longing for change of scene, to visit Dieppe. He was a noble of Genoa, where his name had long been honoured, ere that proud City had fallen from her high and palmy state. He was accompanied by the Signora Teresa, the only surviving offspring of three marriages.

This young lady possessed beauty—exquisite, brilliant, dazzling. Her complexion was that clear olive, through which the blush of maiden purity suffuses itself in a bloom delicate and soft as that of the Provence rose.

Her eyes were dark, full, flashing, yet often relieved by a subduing softness. Her dark hair well accorded with her complexion, clime, and youth: its silken tresses fell upon a neck of exquisite roundness, and were worn so as to shew the pale, high brow. Delicately pencilled was the arched outline of her eye-brows. From her profile, you would think that you beheld the classic contour of some Athenian beauty, the true model of the graceful forms with which the Grecian sculptors delighted *that* period as they bewilder *this*. Then her lips, so beautifully distinct rather than separate, just as if they were about to breatheforth those impulse-words which the lover delights to hear. And, when she did speak, how sweetly fell the music of her voice—like the far-off melody, distant but distinct, which floats upon the waters, while the air is hushed to silence, only broken by the amorous Echo, which faintly repeats them, loth to think such silvery sounds should die. In the rudest crowd, in the noisiest din, Teresa's gentle accents came refreshingly upon the senses, and immediately commanded that hushed atten-

tion, which is the best tribute of respect that Woman can conceive. But, beyond this—beyond the perfect form and the graceful beauty, which made, as it were, a visible atmosphere around her—her mind, naturally intelligent, had been cultivated with no common care. She had numerous accomplishments, she had read much, she had enjoyed the familiar conversation of many men of letters and science in different countries, she had experienced the advantages of far-extended travel—in short, she was charming alike in mind and person.

The Marquis, her father, was very proud of her beauty and accomplishments. Yet to him she long had been the cause of bitter vexation. He prided himself on his high descent, and constantly cherished deep and unavailing regrets, because, from want of a surviving male heir, a title would expire in his own person, which, originally won by the sword in a hard-fought field of fame, had been lineally transmitted through many centuries, without a stain once resting on its ermine. He would have given all his fortune—he would have fed upon

water and a crust—he would have laid down his own life, or even sacrificed that of his daughter, great as was his wayward and fitful love for her—to have a son, by whom the proud name and honors of Foscarini might be saved from extinction. To perpetuate them was with him a passion—the failure of that engrossing desire almost drove him to despair, and at times appeared almost to peril the sanity of his mind.

The Marquis Angelo Foscarini had been born to extensive possessions, and had much augmented them by advantageous marriages. Before he had attained the age of fifty, he was the widower of two noble Roman dames, and had also followed to the grave a lady closely allied to the Imperial house of Austria. Of all his children, only one had survived, and he cursed his fate, and gnashed his teeth, in his splendid solitude, as he thought that this sole survivor was only a daughter. Years rolled on. The excitements of public life lost their power. The snow of age blanched his hair. The track of time traced wrinkles on his brow.

The freshness of his heart was in the tomb of his buried youth. He felt that, with swift and noiseless advances, death was pressing forward. He had a fever-dread of the mere thought of the final hour, which was to hurry him from time to eternity. So, to diminish care—to employ his weary hours—to banish *ennui*—to create a new excitement for his palled spirit—to dissipate the ever-present dread of death, the last of the Foscarini plunged headlong into the vortex of society, as wildly as if the world was only just opening for his enjoyment, and thus he strove to conquer care by revelry.

In this, after all, no harm. To some minds Society may be safer and better than Solitude. But the Marquis did not care for mere pleasure—he craved excitement. He found it in play. He grew accustomed to stake wealth on the cast of the die, and thus spent long nights. At first he played merely to divert his thoughts, and used to amuse himself by watching the anxious faces around him, and the varying passions developed, as the game went on. Soon, however, he came to have an

interest in success or failure. Fortune turned against him, and then he almost blushed to find himself doubling the stakes, and calculating the chances, and eagerly anticipating the result of each cast. Still he went on, and still, though he sometimes won, his losses were frequent and heavy. Then he resolved to play boldly—as he had heard that timid gamblers rarely win—and he would be content with getting back his losses. If, at times, the thought of his daughter came into his mind, he would still the intruding recollection with a "Tush! she is but a woman—a girl. There will be enough for her. What could a child of eighteen do with all my palaces—my jewels—my pictures—my gold? I hoarded wealth, long ago, for my heir; now, I have none: let it go as it may. Come on, come on, it is in vain to think of it. Perhaps I may die to-morrow. There will be enough left for the girl."

Teresa was aware of her father's reckless way of living. He had not taken any pains to conceal it from her. Wholly regardless of how

he wounded her sensitive feelings, he incessantly complained, in her presence as in her absence, of his bitter disappointment at not having a surviving son, and cursed himself for his ill fortune. Teresa was all gentleness and love—for she had warm affections, and never forgot that he was her father—but her love made slight impression on a heart which hourly appeared to become more ossified. But gentleness and love cannot always be repulsed. They have a power which, at times, can pierce even a heart of adamant. Never yet have they been exercised without some good result. When the Marquis saw his fair daughter weeping bitterly, her hands clasped in most unfeigned sorrow, her cheek pale with emotion, when he heard her beseech him to bestow kind words upon her, and implore pardon for the involuntary crime of being a woman, he would cease his reproaches and complainings, and, looking with tenderness and admiration on the graceful form thus bowed in humble entreaty before him, would press a father's kiss upon her head, and abruptly leave the room, as if

afraid that his awakened love might pour forth its strong emotions in words.

In fact, though he very often treated her harshly, the Marquis *did* love Teresa. Not, indeed, with pure paternal love—for the better part of the father was buried with the son who, long since, had died in youth—but he loved her because she was a being of whose beauty, grace, and accomplishments he felt very proud. On that account, he obliged her to accompany him in his travels—on that account, he had refused the richest offers for her hand which the admiring nobles of Italy and Germany had made. With him, Pride was the first and the last. That passion made him delight to exhibit in society the daughter who would, otherwise, have remained in her convent, or, under the care of a duenna, in one of their lonely country villas. While she was with him, the object of universal admiration, the attention she excited gratified his pride. She was *his*, and the admiration bestowed upon her was reflected upon him. "Remain with me yet a little longer," he would sometimes

say, "it will be time enough for you to wed when the old man dies."

At Dieppe, he plunged into revelry yet deeper than Teresa remembered him to have yet yielded to, and indulged in excesses, alike unsuited to his advancing years and his failing health. To the fatal temptations of the gaming-table, he now devoted the greater part of every night, and, though naturally of the most temperate habits, like other children of "the warm South," he had now learned to indulge in the free use of wine. It was his custom to bathe in the sea every morning, and thus recruit his strength for the exhausting pleasures of the night. It chanced, one morning, when the sea was more boisterous, and his frame more enervated than usual, that, being overpowered by a monstrous wave, he was dashed against the beach, breathless and fainting. The next retreating rush of the waters would have borne him out into the midst of the eddying current, without the power of resistance, if a young man, who happened to be bathing near the spot, had not dashed forward

and rescued him. Foscarini, on his recovery, recognized his preserver as a young officer whom he had met at Vienna, and whose attentions to Teresa had been so well received by her, as to cause him some uneasiness. Yet, to this gentleman he now owed his life. So, when the German asked permission to wait upon him at his hotel, to enquire after his health, common courtesy dictated an assent, however constrained and cold.

The young German Officer was more than ever in love with Teresa, but two years had passed since he last had seen her, and he was too expert in the ways of the world to betray that love, as he once before had done. He met and accosted Teresa without any apparent emotion, and the Marquis, narrowly watching both of them, was happy to perceive that she received him without much embarrassment. He paid the usual compliments of society with easy politeness, and Teresa returned them in the same manner. From all this, Foscarini did not hesitate to believe that though the young man might once have entertained a passion for

Teresa, it had long since died away from absence and hopelessness. He did *not* know that, from the time she quitted Vienna, Teresa had contrived to correspond with Stephen Utercliv: and that his presence in Dieppe was caused by her desire that he should join her in a little plot against her father—for his good.

Convinced that nothing was now to be apprehended, the Marquis speedily abandoned the reserve with which, at first, he had received Stephen Utercliv. In a short time, they became great friends. By degrees, the Marquis even formed an attachment for this young man, made him the confidant of his secret cares, told him how he had plunged into the excitement of gaming in order to dissipate bitter thoughts, and laid bare before him all the wretchedness of heart, which he endeavoured to hide from the world beneath the mask of gaiety. And thus Stephen soon thoroughly knew the past and present life of the Marquis: his baffled hopes, his secret griefs, his perpetual regrets, his remorse for time and talents wasted.

Teresa had also revealed to him all that she

knew,—much which he could use as the key to the old man's heart. Long since, she had given her young affection to Stephen Utercliv. Her chief desire now was to draw her father from the debasing pursuits which injured the health of mind and body, and threatened the total ruin of his fortunes.

Stephen had now become so necessary to the Marquis that he spent every evening in his company. Humouring his eagerness for play, he joined him at the gaming table, and speedily became as adventurous a gambler as any in Dieppe. In a short time, they ceased to play at the public table, and made use of a private room in which, instead of adventurous playing against the bank, they might play against each other, allowing the bank a per-centage on the stakes. In this manner the Marquis and Stephen Utercliv now played, one against the other, and, in a month, Utercliv had drawn the full amount of his letters of credit, having lost all to the Marquis. He told this to Teresa, mentioning that he could readily arrange to receive further remittances from Vienna, but she was

afraid that, in the interval, her father might return to the public table, and then again become the prey of sharpers. She therefore insisted on supplying Stephen with money —which, however, he lost. The more he lost, the better pleased was Foscarini, for he could now find happiness in winning that gold which had once been the slave of his will, but now was the ruler of his heart. Meanwhile, however, he abandoned his indulgence in wine, and was by no means as much disposed to play as when he had formerly lost largely. Success had moderated his excitement.

There is a German game called *brelau*, of which the Marquis was very fond. He apprised Stephen of his predilection, and the German lost no time in discovering that it was one of the most interesting games in the world. Up to this time he had lost above ten thousand Napoleons, when, one evening, he came to Foscarini with a mind determined on its course of action. He brought fifty Napoleons with him —*all* that he could then procure. This was the last money that Teresa could give him.

The Marquis had always made her a very splendid allowance, and she had never spent the whole of it. The lover's plot had been to keep the Marquis at play with Utercliv alone. They expected that the smiles of fortune would have been somewhat equally distributed, at least. But their hope had been too sanguine. Instead of alternate good fortune which, while it amused the Marquis, would really not diminish his wealth, there had been a constant run of ill luck against Stephen Utercliv. When he had taken the last fifty Napoleons from Teresa, his words were, " Fortune opposes our good intentions. One trial—one more trial. If I lose this, I play no more. I shall explain all to your father, demand you in marriage, and if he should refuse me, you see no more of me until his death leaves you free." Teresa allowed him to embrace her, and shed many tears at his departure, for she dreaded that her father would reject the suit of her lover, and she knew *him* well enough to dread that he would keep his resolution of not seeing her until she had the freedom of action, of which he spoke.

When Stephen Utercliv went to the *salon*, a little later than usual, he found that the Marquis, tired of waiting for him, had gone to play at the public table. Thither he went, and found every one in a state of high excitement. Fortune had at length come round to the Marquis, and he won, whatever colour he backed. Encouraged by this success, he continued to play, with largely increased stakes. At last, when he remained the only player, he challenged the bank. After some deliberation, his defiance was accepted. He backed one colour, and an uninterrupted series of successes, doubling the stakes each time in arithmetical progression, left him, at last, largely the conqueror. He had broken the bank, and had thus, by one *coup*, regained all his former losses at Dieppe, and swept away the greater part of the gamblers' capital.

Flushed with this success, the Marquis quitted the *salon*, inviting Stephen Utercliv to accompany him to supper at his hotel, also extending his hospitality to four players who, in the early part of the evening, had played with him at

the public table. He had no difficulty in obtaining their company. They consisted of two planters from the Havannah, the captain of an English merchantman, and a Parisian banker. After supper, cards were introduced. The Marquis and Stephen Utercliv were opponents, as usual. Stephen commenced with ten Napoleons :—that stake soon disappeared, as did three others of the same amount. He had only ten pieces left. He was full of agitation. Foscarini, never dreaming how nearly his young friend approached to extremity, rallied him upon the lowness of his stakes. With a trembling hand, the young man placed the remnant of his money on the table. Fortune favoured him with a pair-royal of Kings, and he won a hundred Napoleons from the Parisian banker. Luck continued, and, by five o'clock the next morning, Stephen Utercliv had gained 200,000 francs, the banker had won 80,000, the Englishman, 20,000, and each of the planters, 5,000. This made nearly £13,000 in our money. *Foscarini had lost it all.* It pulled hard upon his gains in the previous part of the

evening. The party took coffee, and separated, agreeing to resume the play at night.

Night came, and the morning's play was child's sport in comparison with what now came on. The other guests, after losing a great portion of their previous winnings, remained simply as spectators, the Marquis and Stephen Utercliv alone continuing to play. It would be tiresome to trace the gradual and heavy losses of the Marquis. First went all his ready money, then followed his ancestral palace at Genoa—his Florentine casino—his Roman villa —his estates in Austria—his pictures—his hereditary jewels. All, all were staked, and lost. Yet he played on, until the day dawned, and awoke him to a sense of the utter ruin he had made. The pale light of the morning struck into the room, and played upon the wall in striking contrast to the dim glare of the expiring tapers. The Marquis looked more like a marble statue than a human, living being. The gold was piled up in heaps—bonds, and contracts, and parchments, lay beside them.

Fearfully appalling was the expression of the old man's countenance. He found himself stripped of everything. Fixing his bloodshot eyes upon Stephen Utercliv, he said, in a tone which sounded like the menacing mutterings of a thunderstorm, "Sir, all that I have lost is yours. I trust that I shall find you a most gentle creditor. The other players, who had the prudence to withdraw early, have won a very trifle; but *you*—houses, lands, jewels, pictures, gold—all, even to the very watch which tells me the hour, are passed away. At this moment, you may say—perhaps you will say, 'Old man, that you can break your fast to-day will be wholly owing to my bounty, for you have nothing of your own.'"

"But allow me—"

"Allow *me*, sir, to speak. I have lost my wealth—all; but perhaps my years and these grey hairs may entitle me to be heard. Perhaps you would command my absence? Perhaps you are anxious to count the sum of your new wealth? You may—"

"Indeed, sir—"

"Again, I say, let me speak.—I think we met at Vienna. I think, young man, that then I gave you to understand that your attentions to my daughter were not acceptable to me?"

"My dear sir—"

"You loved my daughter then? Deny it not. I heard you swear, on bended knees, to love her always. I had the power to say then, and I did say, 'Love her not.' But you did love her. Did you not?"

"Yes."

"I thought so. Do you still love her?—Speak with your lips what the changing hues of your face have already told me. Young man, do you still love my daughter?"

"As I love my life."

"It is well. I am not wholly beggared. I had forgotten one jewel—and the richest. I have one stake left. I WILL PLAY YOU FOR MY DAUGHTER."

At this strange proposal, made with all the measured calmness of despair, all the rest of the party started on their feet in utter astonish-

ment, and it was evident from their looks that they did not wish Stephen to accept it. The young man's face lighted up with a most joyous expression. He could have thrown himself into the arms of the Marquis; but nothing could surpass the *hauteur* with which he was repulsed. Still, not perceiving that his late opponent had become a bitter enemy, Stephen Utercliv drew himself up to his full height, and said, in a grave and dignified manner, "Sir, if you will have me for a son-in-law, here, at this moment, I humbly say, in the presence of these gentlemen, take back all that Chance has robbed you of.—I fear, from your looks, that I do entreat in vain?"

"Indeed you do," exclaimed the Marquis, passionately.

There was silence for some minutes. "Well, then," said Stephen, "I accept your proposal. I will stake whatever you may think fit to name."

The bystanders uttered a murmur of horror. Foscarini glanced at them with stern contempt.

He turned to Stephen, and said, "Whatever sum you please."

"I will stake against your daughter all that I have here won from you—all that I possess in the world besides, even to the reversion of the heritage which will descend to me from my father."

"It is well," said the Marquis.

They sat down. "I am tired of the cards," said the Marquis. "Permit me to propose that we try our fortunes, this time, with the dice?"

"As you please," answered Utercliv.

"And to give variety, suppose that the winner shall be he whose single cast has the lowest number?"

"As you wish," answered Utercliv.

"Then," said the Marquis, apparently as unconcerned as if he was about to play for a five franc piece, "as I am the challenger, I think I should have the first throw; it is rather a disadvantage." He took up the dice-box, gaily rattled the dice, and then made the cast.

"By Jove!" said the English Captain, "that's a good throw. The Marquis has

thrown aces. The Marquis wins. Fifty to one on the Marquis."

"The real odds are not quite so much," said the Marquis. "Besides, M. Utercliv may throw aces also, and then, as there would be a tie, we must throw again, and the chances would be even."

"No great chance," said the Captain, "that he will throw aces. Now, if the Marquis had thrown *seven*, it would be a different thing. There are more chances that seven will turn up, on two dice of sixes, than any other number—seize-ace make seven; so do cinq-deuce; so do quatre-trois. To make a cinq, you can only have quatre-ace and trois-deuce; and for a quatre we have only deuces, or tray-ace."

"You are quite learned in these matters," said Utercliv, taking the box.

"Why," answered the Captain, "as we sometimes play hazard in England, to say nothing of back-gammon, Hoyle stands next to hand with us, like the Post Office Directory and the Red Book, on the desk or library-table."

As Stephen's acquaintance with English literature did not extend to these valuable hand-books, he merely bowed to the Captain, and rattled the dice.

He threw them.

The dice had accidentally fallen in an odd position. One of them had lodged on the top of the other. *It was an ace.* Thus only *one* actually appeared as Stephen Utercliv's cast. The Marquis gently raised the topmost die. The second die, strangely enough, *was an ace also.*

"You must throw again," said the Captain, "that cast is no cast, as both dice did not shew."

"No," lisped the Parisian banker, who had some experience at Frescati's, "I think that as the Marquis has raised the die, and shown the second die to be also an ace, it must be considered that aces have been shown, and it must be taken as a tie. Both gentlemen must throw again."

"Certainly not," said the Captain. "I have played five thousand hits of backgammon in

England, to say nothing of hazard, and when the die lodges, the caster throws the dice over again, but the other throw stands."

"Sir," said the Marquis, addressing Stephen Utercliv, "neither of these gentlemen have spoken correctly. *You have won the throw.* The agreement was clear—that the thrower of the lowest number should win. I threw aces. You, more fortunate, have thrown a single ace. The game is yours."

Fearful that some dreadful scene might follow, the bystanders prepared to depart. The Marquis was calm. They did not see that it was the calmness of despair. They paid their parting respects to him, which he acknowledged with his usual stately courtesy. But they paused, as they were at the door, for they saw that the father who had just lost his child on the cast of a die, was subdued to tears.

Stephen drew near to him, and said, in the most conciliatory manner, "My dear Marquis, consider all that has passed between us as but a dream. You are not a loser, nor am I a winner."

"I *not* a loser? Ask these gentlemen whether I have lost nothing. Look at your own rich spoils on that table, and say that you have won nothing. Think that I have lost my honor—that I have lost my own self-esteem—that I have put up my child as a gambler's last desperate stake—and say that I have lost nothing.—Not a word. Think not I mean to excite your compassion. Thank God, a Foscarini need not stoop so low as that. No, if my manner—if my tears, say so, then my manner and my tears do belie me."

He advanced to the door. Before he could reach it, he had fallen down. Strong agitation had overcome him. The old man was insensible:—a paralytic stroke had made him incapable of motion, mind and body.

Immediate assistance was afforded. In a few weeks, the Marquis was pronounced out of danger. In little more than a month from the attack he was once more convalescent, though much shaken, and received no visitors. His daughter, who was unwearied in her at-

tendance on him, noticed, with sorrow, that, since his illness, his whole manner had changed. He had no idea that she was aware of what had occurred on the last occasion when he had played with Stephen Utercliv. He felt now that something remained for him to do, and he nerved himself to do it.

Utercliv had gone to a *soirée*, and on returning to the hotel in which he resided, the porter informed him that two persons were in his apartments, and (it now being midnight) had there been waiting for some time. On entering the room he saw—the Marquis and his daughter.

"No doubt, my presence here at this late hour is a surprise to you," said Foscarini, deliberately. However, this interview would have taken place before, if it had not pleased Heaven, as you know, to afflict me with sudden and severe illness. My first visit was due to you, Sir; gambling debts, you know," he added, with a bitter smile, "must be paid. I come to discharge mine. Sir, you have won my daughter. She is here. I bring her to you.

I have used no force to conduct her hither. She accompanied me of her own free will. Did you not, Teresa?"

He spoke with a cold sneer upon his lips. His daughter could not answer for her tears.

After a brief delay, in which he appeared to reflect on what he should say, he resumed :— "She is yours. I have no longer a daughter. But you, mark me,—you have not yet a wife. I will never acknowledge you as a son-in-law. Whoever weds my daughter, must be of noble lineage :—you, Sir, are nobody."

"Let me assure you, that you are mistaken." said Stephen Utercliv. "I have not hitherto spoken of my family, but I believe that it is in every respect entitled to rank with your own."

"Not until my death," continued the Marquis, not heeding Utercliv's observation, "can Teresa be your wife. Not before, because she would not do anything contrary to my wish. However, you won the stake, and here she is." And as he said this, he took Teresa by the hand, and presented her to Utercliv.

Immediately, he went to the door, turned the key in the lock, and fixed the bolt. He rushed back into the middle of the room. "Now for revenge," he shouted, in a terrible voice, and with the fiery glance and infuriated gesture of a maniac. He produced a pair of pistols. "Mark me!—both of these weapons are unloaded. I will load one of them. You see that I have put in the powder. Let me now drive the ball firmly down. It is done. We will confound these weapons together, so that neither can know which is loaded. There. I do not know which holds the deadly charge. One of us will know at once. We will each take a pistol, present it at the breast, and pull the trigger at the same moment. If I slay you, I dare say that my daughter will return home with me, for it is scarcely possible, that you can have disposed of her by testament. If you kill me, Teresa may wed her father's slayer,—if she will."

While the Marquis had been busied with the pistols, and while he had been speaking, Stephen Utercliv had steadily kept his eyes

upon him, confident that his mind was affected, and undecided what to do or say. He knew that a maniac is best controlled by quiet firmness. He therefore, listened with calmness, to what the Marquis said, in the hope, too, that his passion might exhaust itself in vehement language. Now, when the Marquis ceased to speak, Stephen again made an effort to reason with him.

"Your daughter," said he, "belongs not to you nor to me. In a moment of excitement you risked her upon the hazard of the dice. I do not claim her, because the cast was in my favour. I would hope, that when you examine my pretensions, you will find that, in family and in fortune, I am not inferior to yourself. I love your daughter, and would be content to leave to her the decision on which depends my future happiness. As for the losses which you sustained, I have not taken advantage of them. Your money, your papers, your securities, are in yonder desk, at your command, whenever you please to receive them. I played with you not for gain, but in the hope of weaning

you from play, or, if that unhappy passion continued, of letting you feel its evil effects. I fancied that if I could make you believe that you were ruined, the effect of the reverse would be beneficial, and then that, when your fortune was restored to you, I might hope to be repaid by your sanction for my attachment to Teresa."

"Name her not," shouted the Marquis. "Move one step—utter one word, and I fire into my daughter's heart. Sit down!"

With strength to which his fury now added vehement power, the Marquis forced Utercliv into a chair. He seated himself in another, immediately opposite. There they sat, so close that Stephen felt his hot breath upon his face. He thrust one of the pistols into Stephen's hand. Teresa, moveless as a statue —paralysed by fear—remained standing within a few feet of her father and her lover. She was wholly incapable of action or speech, and looked on, like one astonished.

"Now," cried the Marquis, "comes on the last scene of the melo-drama. The devoted

lover, the stony-hearted father, the beautiful daughter—all are on the stage, and one little click of the trigger, will give the *dénouement.* Now, Sir,—you have your weapon. Thus, I raise mine, and when I count *three,* I shall fire. You may do the same."

With an involuntary impulse, Stephen raised his hand :—that which held the pistol.

"One—two—three." Instantly, the Marquis pulled the trigger——

The Major, abruptly pausing as he uttered this unfinished sentence, remarked that the sky appeared rather cloudy, and he thought he would go into the open air, and return with a report of the prospects of fine weather for the next day. Accordingly, he was lounging out of the room, with provoking coolness, when an universal exclamation arrested his progress.

"Surely," said one of us, speaking for the rest, "You cannot think of leaving us, even for five minutes, in a state of uncertainty ?"—He

affected not to know what was meant, but a word and a glance from the fair widow, who appeared to have acquired some influence over him, rather felt than exercised, quickened his intelligence. He enquired what was meant—what was asked of him?—"Nothing more,' said Lady Morton, "than that you should bring your story to a conclusion. You cannot, intentionally, be so provoking as to think of leaving it without a *finale*, like an epigram without its point. You are as bad as—

'Him who left untold
The story of Cambuscan bold.'

You have given us a narration with all fulness of detail as to characters and circumstance,—you have brought the hero and heroine into a difficulty, out of which, it would seem, that nothing short of a miracle can extricate them,—and just when one more half sentence would give us the *dénouement*, you leave it unspoken. To say nothing of the impropriety of leaving the gentlemen in suspense, you ought to recollect, that the only heir-

loom which our sex inherits from Eve is—Curiosity."

"And the power of persuasion," added the Major, with a bow.

"Let us, then, exercise this power," exclaimed both of the Ladies, "and prevail upon you to complete the story."

"Let me see," said the Major, re-seating himself, "Let me see where we left off. I remember: Stephen Utercliv and the Marquis were seated opposite each other, pistol-in-hand, only one of the weapons being loaded, and neither of the combatants knowing which held it. The Marquis pulled the trigger, and *the pistol missed fire;* thanks to his using flints instead of percussion caps. Overcome by excitement, the old man fell back in his seat: he had fainted. M. Utercliv unlocked the door, had the Marquis conveyed to his chamber, to which a brain-fever confined him for many weeks. On his recovery, Stephen

Utercliv solicited and obtained an interview. He succeeded in convincing the Marquis that he was neither an adventurer nor a fortune-hunter, but the only son of a Polish Nobleman, whose family had settled at Vienna, on the first partition of Poland, in 1772, and was not inferior in blood or wealth to the Foscarini, even in the proudest days of Genoa. A great change had passed over the mind of the Marquis during his recent sufferings. He looked back on the past with horror, believing that his previous conduct had exhibited insanity rather than any other motive; a belief shared by all who were cognizant of the circumstances. As a reparation, he not only consented to the marriage of M. Utercliv with Teresa, but hastened it by every means in his power. Within three months, therefore, of the events which I have related, the espousal took place; and, in another month—rather happily, I think, for his son-in-law---the Marquis shuffled off this mortal coil. So ends my story. As I knew the parties, I can vouch for the survivors being now, to use the words

of one of the narratives which charmed us in youth, 'As happy as the day is long.'"

This, as agreed upon, was the last story related on that evening—and yet, perhaps, not *quite* the last.

Every one who has been to Matlock, in suitable weather, must recollect that an excursion upon the Derwent, at that sweet time which the Americans call *sun-down*, is often and pleasantly indulged in. Less frequent, but sometimes even more pleasant (though *that* depends very much on companionship,) is this river-nautilism on a moon-light night. Sometimes, when the matter has been arranged before-hand, the aid of a band of music is called in, and very beautiful is the effect produced by the "concord of sweet sounds," floating across the water, breaking, as it were, against the rugged rocks, and strangely reverberating through that charmed valley. And when, as the oars gently dash through the waters, on which the moon-

beams throw a long silvery line of light, a sweet voice breaks upon the stillness—now alone, and now in harmonious concert with another voice—the effect is more delightful still.

It happened, on this very evening, that the moon was shining "bright as day," and that I, who had previous knowledge of Matlock, had mentioned how pleasant I had found it to enjoy an hour on the water. This led to a doubt as to the propriety of such an adventure, a laugh at its romance, and an enquiry whether, at that late hour (it was ten o'clock, a terribly dissipated hour for quiet Matlock,) a boat could be procured. There was as little difficulty in obtaining the boat, as in persuading Lady Morton to make one of the improvised aquatic party. When we came to the important point of embarkation, however, the Major and myself were the only gentlemen who adhered to our purpose. The lady confided herself to our care—Lady Tressilian had confessed to a dread of cold, and a desire to strengthen herself, by rest, for our morrow's

tour—and as the Major either did not know how to row, or pretended that he did not, upon me devolved the duty of acting as waterman, a task which I happily performed without the slightest accident.

Like Deaf Stapleton, in "Jacob Faithful," I had the discretion not to notice, or not to seem to notice, what passed during the *tête-à-tête*. All I can say is that the lady and the gentleman evidently had a great deal to say to each other—that, in a few minutes, they appeared quite unconscious of the presence of a third person, though I kept rowing up and down the river for nearly two mortal hours,—that the gentleman must have considered the lady in some eminent peril, for, after a little time, he put his arm around her, to prevent her falling out of the boat, no doubt,—that, to reward him for this considerate attention, the lady could not do less than allow her little hand to repose in his,—that there was a world of broken whispers—that, when I told them it was after midnight, they insisted that half an hour had not elapsed since we came upon the

water,—that when I assured them the hour was much later than they believed, the lady appealed to her watch, and confusedly admitted that the time *had* glided on she knew not how,—that, as the moonlight fell upon the watch, I could see that, really and truly, it was the very watch which the Major had exhibited as that which was only to pass from him to his future wife,—and that, when we got home, after I had whispered that I hoped I might offer him my congratulations, the Major warmly grasped my hand, and said, "My dear fellow, I am the happiest man on earth." From all which, it is my confidential belief (but I do not want all the world to know it) that if reading D'Herbelot be like looking over the back of a camel, a *tête-à-tête* on the Derwent, by moonlight, is equivalent to declaration and acceptance.

The next day was dedicated to an excursion to South Wingfield and Hardwick, and our adventures may thus be related.

SOUTH WINGFIELD AND HARDWICK.

It is a matter for grave deliberation, whether May—the most radiant of all the months—properly belongs to Spring or Summer. In the South of England, it certainly is one of the Summer-months, but as you advance northward, strong reasons will frequently present themselves to create and foster the belief, that genial May, with her coronal of flowers and leaves—is one of the subjects of capricious Spring. In Scotland, beyond all doubt, May occupies the same place, relative to the Seasons, as April does with us. Whoever wishes to prolong or abridge any particular season of

the year can readily do so, by leaving the South sooner or later, and remaining more or less time in the North of Scotland. There, for example, he will often find Autumn lingering as late as the middle of November,—a full month or six weeks after he has caught the last glimpse of her glowing features and graceful movements in the Southern portions of Great Britain.

However the month may be claimed—and perhaps, as one of the gentler sex, she may sometimes be allowed to act capriciously, and flirt with the freshness of Spring, and the sunshine of Summer—many a lover of Nature will exclaim, with "the Poet of all circles and the idol of his own,"

> "Of all the fair months, that round the sun
> In light, linked dance their circles run,
> Sweet May, shine thou for me."

Our party now entered upon the last day of May, in 1833, and many besides myself looked out early on that morning, to see whether we were to have favourable weather

for the rather extended journey, we had determined to take,—that is, relatively speaking, for a pleasure-trip of twelve or fifteen miles and back, is something to accomplish at Matlock.

As I saw the sky with but a few white clouds scudding across its azure—the leaves and the grass diamonded with myriads of drops, left by the slight showers which had fallen after three o'clock, when the moon had set, and felt the fresh breeze from the hills, in pleasant contrast with the oppressive warmth of the previous day, I caught myself involuntarily repeating the commencement of "Rimini,"

> "The sun is up, and 'tis a morn of May."

Then, too, I thought how exquisitely true to what I saw spread before me, was the continuation,

> "A morn, the loveliest which the year has seen,
> Last of the Spring, yet fresh with all its green;
> For a warm eve, and gentle rains at night,
> Have left a sparkling welcome for the light."

We contrived to get through an early breakfast, followed by

"Hot haste, and hurrying to and fro,"

before we started. Our projected route included South Wingfield, which has been, and Hardwick, which yet is, a manor-house of the olden time.

There is no use in recapitulating the number of vehicles, nor their variety, nor the disposition of those who occupied them. I noticed that, with the tact of an old soldier, the Major had contrived to appropriate to himself the only gig—name unromantic!—which had been sent for our use, and it did not require very much pressing to persuade Lady Morton to entrust herself in it to his care, on the assurance that he was an accomplished Jehu. Thus, everything being satisfactorily arranged, and everybody suitably accommodated, our cavalcade set forth.

At South Wingfield Manor House was to be our first resting place. We had the river Derwent running by us during a portion of the

ride—sparkling as it rapidly rushed on through a fair district, fertile, well-wooded, and picturesque. Then, leaving it, we ascended the hill to Holloway, and, from the high road across the cliff, which overhangs that village, had a wide and wild range of beautiful landscape. On, thence, to Crich, the vicinity of which is literally crowded with lead-mines, (some of which are believed to be the richest in Europe) alternated with quarries of limestone of great extent. Every foot of the road, and indeed the same may be said of most roads about Matlock, sparkled in the sunshine, as if strewed with gems, the broken spar and lustrous ore leaving traces all around. On, a little farther, and we reached Crich Cliff. Then, alighting, we looked around us and saw such scenery as would have charmed a Painter. Far-stretching below was the fertile valley of the Derwent—and, after glancing over the tract through which it ran (with its wooded hills and bare rocks, green meadow-land and arable, glorious with the yet brighter green of what promised to be a plenteous harvest, straggling

villages, and the trim grounds and pleasant habitations of country gentlemen,) the eye rested, at last, on the fair borough of Derby, through which the Derwent glides, and in which, far over all, towered the tall square turret of All Saints' Church. And then, as not satisfied even with this view, we adventured the ascent of The Stand, a tower on the very summit of Crich Cliff, from which it is said that five counties may be seen—some of the party even professed to have caught a glimpse of Lincoln Cathedral. They saw it, perhaps, in their "mind's eye, Horatio,"—even as, at a later day, I persuaded myself that, from the top of Loch-na-gar, in Aberdeenshire, I had beheld the German Ocean on one side, and the Atlantic on the other. What others have beheld, why should we not have seen?

Down, now, by a gentle descent to a more level district,—down through the pleasant green lanes which are so peculiar to England, that an American once told me, that "until he had winded his way through them, he never had fully realized the essential difference be-

tween the old country and that which he called his own, far beyond the Western main." Rapidly did we pass forward, until, we saw, crowning the summit of the hill in front, the ruins of what was once a stately pile, remembered in history too, as one of the many places in which Mary of Scotland—at once so fair and so unfortunate—had been imprisoned.

The Manor-House of South Wingfield was built in the middle of the fifteenth century, by one of the ministers of our Sixth Henry. After the fashion of the time—in accordance with its necessities, also, it may be—it was a castellated stronghold. During the wars between Charles Stuart and his Parliament, it was dismantled. Neglect sat within its walls thenceforth—the property came into litigation and remained under it for a long time,—at last, the party to whom "the law's delay" had awarded it, thought it better to erect a new dwelling, a little lower down, than attempt to render the old place habitable. For this purpose the most beautiful portions of the ancient Manor House were taken away, and worked into the

new edifice—a desecration which reminds us of the sculptures of the Parthenon being pounded and burnt to make lime for the use of the Turks.

Sufficient remains to show what Wingfield Manor House has been—a building intermediate, in its appearance and use, between the garrisoned castles of a remoter time, and the domestic dwellings of a later period. The place is now in a sad state of ruin—but not the less impressive on account of that decay. The path to one of its entrances is through a sort of avenue of yew trees—themselves venerable in their gloomy antiquity. A farmer lives in one part of the ruins, which has been roughly fitted up for his accommodation, and what was the principal of two courts is now a farm yard. What was a great hall may be seen—but it is roofless. Beneath it is a crypt, with a groined roof, resting upon pillars. It is dimly lighted, and, at times, the effects of light and shade are such as would have been after Rembrandt's own heart. What the purpose of this crypt or vault may have been, no one now can tell;

but it was built with evident care and skill, and cost was not spared. There are heraldic shields, curiously carved, on the centres of the groins of the arches, and these, and all the other carvings, continue to show clear, deep, and sharp.

But we must not linger too long at Wingfield. On—on to Hardwick Hall, through Tibshelf, changing horses at Alfreton, and leaving Chesterfield, with its beautiful church and crooked steeple, far on the left.

What a bold and beautiful view as the old Hall is neared. There rises a hill before you, on the brow of which two edifices are seen standing clear and distinct, by the relief of ancient and thick woods, which stretch far beyond in the back ground, and on both sides. As you close upon it, the more ancient edifice, thickly covered with ivy, which seems to bind the grey walls together, is perceived to be a ruin. Immediately adjacent is another stately building, quaint in aspect, and peculiar in character, This is Hardwick Hall, built by the celebrated Countess of Shrewsbury, ("Bess of

Hardwick,") wife of many husbands, who brought the estate into the possession of the Cavendish family. It is built on what has been well described as "the quaintest form of Elizabethan architecture," and on the curiously carved battlements of its towers are traceries, which, at a distance, appear like ornamental arabesques, but, on nearer view, shew as the many times repeated initials [E. S.] of the lady who built the Hall, and was constantly engaged with such stone and mortar occupation, from its having been foretold that, while so employed, she certainly need not fear death. Oddly enough, as the story runs, she actually did die during a hard frost, when the masons could not work! She built three stately mansions—Chatsworth, Hardwick, and Oldcotes—in her native county of Derby.

Precisely as Hardwick Hall was left at her death, in 1607, does it remain now. The Duke of Devonshire, who has taste as well as wealth, has been careful to direct that it shall be kept up. The old interior fittings remain,

—there is ancient furniture, though it may not be the very furniture used by "Bess of Hardwick,"—no lack of arras, or hangings of tapestry, and the walls plentifully adorned with ancient portraits. It is a place to be seen rather than rapidly described. Among its popular associations, is that which assumes it to have been one of the prison dwellings of Mary Stuart—but her abode was in the older Hall, as the edifice erected by the Countess of Shrewsbury was not built until many years after Mary's death. Still, Hardwick is crowded with memories of the fair captive, and one of the apartments, which bears her name, contains the furniture of the chambers which she occupied in the ruined Hall, including some velvet hangings, believed to have been embroidered by herself. In the Picture Gallery, where the tapestried walls are enriched with the portraits of many whose names belong to the most stirring periods of our English story, are the likenesses of Mary Stuart and her relentless rival, Elizabeth. There, also, hangs the portrait of Lady Jane Grey, the monarch-victim to ano-

ther Queen. Not the least interesting among these portraits are two which represent "Bess of Hardwick,"—one in the bloom of youth, the other when she had "fallen into the sere and yellow leaf." She appears to have possessed all the beauty which had made her wife of four husbands,—together with the keen glance and determined spirit which bespoke her as mistress of the worldly art of obtaining and retaining wealth. In every room which we entered, the initials E. S. were repeated, surmounted with the coronet of a Countess, which she had doubly the right to exhibit.

A lounge through the Park, amid its oaks of immense girth and yews of great size, brought us back, at length, to the front of the mansion. There, of course, somebody mentioned the difficulty, when blindfolded, of walking to the door, from the gate, without deviating from the broad flagged way, and then, as a matter of course, also, all of us were presently making the experiment, and with such indifferent success that, when any one happened to perform the feat, a

doubt was loudly expressed whether he had not had a surreptitious glance at the path, from beneath the kerchief which covered his eyes.

Thence, at last and with reluctance, we quitted Hardwick, where a week might be pleasantly and advantageously spent by any one, but particularly by an artist. As I looked around, in the midst of the greenery of the Park, very appropriately might I have quoted the lines

> "In silent tremor, as I stand afraid,
> Half joyed at Nature's grandeur, half dismayed."

But I did not quote them, for they were not written at the time, nor for many years afterwards.

Opposite to the entrance to the Park is a hostelrie, like the Hut, so well known to all who have visited Newstead Abbey; from which, as caterer to the party, I had arranged that we should receive such additions, which thence could readily be supplied, as were necessary to complete the plenteous luncheon, which we had taken care

to bring with us from Matlock. Not much difficulty was there, either, in obtaining leave to take that agreeable repast, *al fresco*, under the shade of a wide-spreading oak in the Park.

So passed on the day; and then, taking a farewell glance of the old Hall, our vehicles were once more put into motion, and we leisurely returned to Matlock A late dinner, and it was consolatory to notice that each and all of us were able to do justice to the creature-comforts of the table. He was a sound and sagacious philosopher who said, when taunted with an inclination for epicurism, that Heaven certainly never meant to reserve the good things of earth, air, and water, for the gratification of none but fools. But, in this world, even appetite must cease, at table; though, to be sure, it may be succeeded by pleasure of another kind. And so we can bear with the removal of the feast to which we have done justice, when we reflect that bright "wine, which maketh glad the heart of man," is to follow in companionship with the

delicate and luxurious dessert, to supply which all parts of the world are tributary. The juice of the grape itself, like liquid ruby or potable gold, from France, Germany, and Portugal, with a contribution, perhaps, from the terraced vineyards of Madeira; the odorous coffee from Arabia, with sugar from the Indies; the swelling raisins from Spain; the luscious figs from lands whose shores are washed by the tideless Mediterranean; the mealy dates from Morocco; the green olive from the Levant; the almonds from Asia; the rich apples from America; the preserved guava from intertropical climes; while from the hot-houses and gardens of our own fair land, came the golden pine, and Muscatel and Frontignac grapes, with currants, gooseberries, strawberries, cherries, and plums, in greater perfection than they can be procured in any other part of the world. He must be unconscionable indeed, who is not content with such delicacies as these, even after a moderate dinner. *We* had consciences, and did not complain.

The next day, the fifth of our sojourn at Matlock, was the First of June, formerly called "the glorious," on account of Lord Howe's victory. There had been a change of moon that morning, which probably might account for the cold and comparative gloom, realizing Moore's adaptation of Horace Walpole's saying, that

> "June had now
> Set in with all his usual rigour."

But gloom can be only external in pleasant companionship, and the sociality of breakfast is irresistible. While we were at the table, the postman brought in a plentiful supply of correspondence, the perusal of which, by common consent, was entered upon forthwith; while, for such as received no letters, there were the London Papers of the preceding evening, and that amusing repository of county and general news, the *Derbyshire Courier* of that very morning. In a short time, Tressilian announced, as part of the intelligence communicated by the missives which had reached him, the necessity of leaving

for London on the following day, and this, in effect, was equivalent to the breaking up of our party, as Lady Morton was to accompany them.

As we had previously arranged to devote a portion of this day to the resumption of our former occupation of story-telling, we lost little time—after newspapers had been looked over, and letters answered—in resuming our sitting. Crayon, during this interval, had been examining one of his portfolios, and from it now producing a sketch, which, he assured us, represented a well-known edifice at Constantinople, called the Maiden Tower, offered to enlighten us as to its original purpose, by relating what tradition had imagined or discovered, as to its original occupancy. He warned us that the Legend was very brief, and that he should not have thought of repeating it, if it did not in some manner bear out a remark that had fallen from Tressilian, at breakfast, about the transmission of popular stories from one country to another, and their reproduction, with some slight differences of

circumstance and costume, to suit each new locality. Having examined, and admired his drawing, we now proceeded to give due attention to his story.

IX.

THE MAIDEN TOWER.

The Thracian Bosphorus—that deep and rapid channel which connects the Black Sea with the Sea of Marmora—is studded with many a fair island. On one of the smallest of these, nearly midway in the stream, at its western termination, stands a square building, called "The Maiden Tower," which is now used as the plague-hospital of Constantinople. Many are the traditions connected with this miniature fortalice, and extremely vague are the notices of it which travellers have been able to collect. The most current belief is that it was built by the Emperor Manuel,

centuries ago, for the purpose of a double communication—with Scutari on the Asian side, and with the point of coast occupied by the Serai Bournou on the Asian. It is added, that when the hostile visit of a Venetian fleet was anticipated, a strong iron chain used to be drawn on both sides, across the entire breadth of the strait.

Another account (far more popular among the ladies of Istambol) is, that in this very island was the dwelling of the fair Hero, to whom Leander paid nightly visits, swimming across the strait from Scutari—either because he had not money enough to keep a caïque of his own, or was afraid of trusting the secret of his visits to the hired caïquejhes of the time. It is alleged, further, that when the lovers perished, a tower was erected on this island to perpetuate their memory, and it is sagely argued, in support of this theory, that on no other grounds can Turk or Giaour account for the fact that the building is sometimes called "Leander's Tower."

A third popular tradition is, that, long years

ago, a beautiful Georgian was sent to this tower, in a sort of honorable captivity, until the Sultan, whom she had scorned, should have time to throw the handkerchief to her—that her lover found his way from their native hills, discovered her retreat, and, under the cover of darkness, boldly ventured to climb into the splendid cage of his bird of beauty—that he remained with her until star flashed forth after star, lighting up the jubilee of Night's royal state—that he frequently repeated his visits—and that, at last, when the Sultan sought the maiden, it was discovered that she had fled.

But the most romantic of all the traditions connected with the Maiden Tower (the Turks better know it as The Guz-Couli,) is that which I shall now relate.

One of the Sultans, many a century since, was so unfortunate as not to have one daughter, though the Imperial nursery swarmed with children of the other sex. The longer he was without this blessing, the greater grew his desire for it, and great was his joy, when it was announced to him that a favourite slave had

become the mother of a female child, beautiful (as the messenger figuratively declared,) as the star which rises earliest and lingers latest in the heavens. So delighted was the Sultan with this intelligence, that he immediately raised the mother of the babe from an Odalique to the rank of a Sultana, the highest dignity he could confer.

Of course, the future fate and fortunes of the child became objects of speculation in the Seragilo, and it appeared only natural that the Sultan should endeavour to read the future of her destiny. A celebrated Dervish, who had made ten pilgrimages to the Holy City, and was credibly believed to have miraculously obtained a chip of the famous and sacred Bracktan (or black stone in the Kaaba,) at Mecca, was summoned to Constantinople, from his retreat in the Caucasian mountains, to discover and declare what the stars might shew of the child's fate. Being paid a large sum ere he commenced his astral calculations, and promised very handsome presents if his predictions should be favourable, the holy man

declared that the young Fatima should be happy and fortunate as heart could wish her, but that, during the interval between her sixteenth and eighteenth years, her life would be in peril from a serpent.

The child grew up, beautiful as the poetic image which the Sculptor releases from the marble, and all blessed her, because it was known that in her imperial father's angriest moods, a word from her would subdue him into clemency. As year after year beheld the unfolding of this fair flower, her father noticed with delight, that seldom had earth been gladdened by a more lovely presence. She had that sweetest of all graces—the grace of gentleness. She had more of loveliness than beauty, and it might truly be said of her that

"She moved in light of her own making."

Her movements might be called features, so delicately graceful and expressive were they. Hers was the heart and the nature which make life of value, the shrines which sanctify love and purify passion. Some one has said

that the youth of Woman is the very poetry of being, and he would have believed it had he known Fatima.

When the maiden approached the close of her fifteenth year, the Sultan, her father, had the little tower in the island of the Bosphorus fitted up to be her dwelling-place during the next two years. Thither, whenever the cares of empire permitted, did he resort to enjoy the society of that dear child, and there, it was said, did her gentle and thoughtful spirit continue to influence the conduct and soften the heart of the Emperor of the East. Many believed that the prediction should be taken as figurative, rather than real, and that the only serpent to be dreaded by a Turkish maiden in the spring of Womanhood, was the general deceiver—Love!

It became well known that Fatima dwelt in the solitary tower, and many a petition was placed in the basket which, with her own hands, she daily drew up to her eyrie—many an offering of flowers and fruit did the hands of gratitude deposit there.

The two years rolled swiftly on. They reached the very eve of their completion. The next day would see the maiden freed from the confinement in which the watchful affection of her anxious father had placed her. Great preparations were made for the triumphant return to the beautiful home of her childhood, within sight of which the tower stands. Asia and Europe vied, on this occasion, in rendering honour and paying homage to the beautiful, the beloved. By the Sultan's command, every captive in his dominions—whether for crime or debt—would be set free on the next morning. In short, seldom had the gorgeous East, with all its profuse magnificence, been so intent upon display as on this auspicious occasion.

The happy day dawned, and Fatima arose with the Sun. She hurried to the little gallery which runs round the upper part of the tower, and from which could be observed that, on the rock beneath, was a little basket which affection or gratitude had brought to the island, and left there for her acceptance. She pulled

it up, and found it to contain a present of fresh fruit, carefully packed in the cool and broad leaves of the vine.

Within an hour after this, a boat rapidly swept across the Strait, from the opposite point, whereon stands the Seraglio, with its beautiful gardens. It conveyed the Sultan, hastening to offer the earliest congratulations to his daughter on her escape from the anticipated peril, and on the bright future before her.

He hurried to her apartment, and found her lying on one of the couches, as if in sleep. Alas! it was the sleep of death. Among the fruit which the basket contained, an asp had found its way, and its minute bite upon her breast had at once fatally fulfilled the prediction, and destroyed the maiden.

This is the true legend of The Maiden Tower, and from this, in all likelihood, the edifice obtained the name by which it is distinguished to the present day.

"Here," said the Artist, "is a striking illustration of the similarity between the legends of the East and those of the West. In the Third Calendar's Story, in the Arabian Nights' Entertainments, (which have charmed all of us in youth, and rarely fail to delight us when we return to them in maturer years,) the whole interest turns on an incident of the same character as that which I have now related. Both stories appear deeply imbued with that fatality which forms the distinguishing feature in Eastern belief and practice. But the incidents are familiar in this country. Near Bristol are the remains of a tower called Cook's Folly, erected to be the dwelling-place of a youth of whom it had been predicted that, (like the Fatima of my Turkish legend,) his life would be in peril from a serpent until the completion of his eighteenth year. The dangerous time had nearly expired, when the youth died from the venomous bite of an adder, which had been accidentally conveyed to his isolated abode in a bundle of fagots."

"Nay," said the Irishman, "you need not confine your illustration to that solitary instance. In the South of Ireland, on the summit of a mountain, called Corrig Thierna (the Chieftain's Rock,) is a heap of stones which, if there be truth in tradition, was brought there to build a castle in which was to dwell a son of Roche, Prince of Fermoy, of whom it had been predicted that he would be drowned before his twentieth year. The child, when only five years old, fell into a pool of water which had been collected, on the top of the mountain, to make mortar for the erection of the tower, in which it was intended he should be kept 'out of harm's way,' until the perilous period had elapsed. The child was drowned. In each case you see, the prophecy appears to have brought about its own fulfilment."

"Yes," said Lady Morton, "there is a moral in these old traditions, did we but know how to seize and apply it."

"The circumstance you have mentioned, about Corrig Thierna," observed the Major,

" has been noticed, I think, in one of Crofton Croker's Fairy Legends?"

" It has," said the Irishman. " There are very few of the fairy tales and traditions of the South of Ireland which Croker has not contrived to collect and work up into a pleasant narrative."

" When I was abroad," said the Artist, " I found Croker's volumes translated into three or four Continental languages. In his own way he is as popular as Scott."

" He has a combination of the qualities," said the Irishman, " which make the perfection of a story-teller. He has a talent for collecting legends, and he has the strong imagination which idealizes the merest matter-of-fact. I wonder when America will have a Croker to collect and immortalize her Indian traditions."

" Washington Irving has attempted it," said Tressilian, " but his Rip Van Winkle has been traced to a German origin, and indeed *his* trans-Atlantic legends appear to be old friends in a new attire. Who can say whence any

traditional stories are derived? Some time ago, a supplement to the Thousand-and-One Nights, containing an Arabian tale called The Sage Heycar, was published at Paris, and the translator noted the curious fact that this Oriental story contained many incidents exactly similar to passages in the life of Æsop :—such as sixteen pages of details of a visit made by Heycar to the court of Pharaoh, which are the same, word for word, with the account of the like visit made by Æsop. So, too, the challenge which Pharaoh sent to the King of Abyssinia, demanding him to build a palace in the air, and the ingenious means to which Æsop had recourse, are transferred to Heycar. The fables of Æsop, the Phrygian, have been claimed for Lokman, the Arabian philosopher, and now the very incidents of his life are taken from him by Heycar."

"Our own Coventry legend of Lady Godiva," said Butler, "is claimed by the Arabians. In Von Hammer's new Arabian Nights is the story called Camaralzeman and the Jeweller's Wife, founded on an incident precisely simi-

lar to that in which the English heroine appears."

"The truth is," answered Tressilian, "it is impossible to ascertain what coincident mythology connects the East and the West. We know not what relation Thor of Scandinavia may have with Vishnu of Hindostan. Our oldest English stories appear to have corresponding legends among the Celts, Danes, Scandinavians, and Normans, and, again, these have wandered either to or from the East. Even such thoroughly English stories as Tom Thumb, Jack the Giant Killer, and Whittington and his Cat, are claimed as aboriginal in foreign countries. The Wise Men of Gotham, one of the oldest of our provincial legends, is given, nearly verbatim, in one of the German Popular Stories, collected by the Brothers Grimm. and its incidents may be found in the Pentamerone (in the story of Bardiello,) but has been translated from the Tamul tongue, which is a dialect of southern India, as the "Adventures of Gooroo Noodle and his Five Disciples."

"All of which shews," said the Irishman, "that nothing is original. I shall venture, however, to relate an Irish legend which has escaped the researches of Mr. Croker, and his crowd of imitators."

END OF VOL. II.

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